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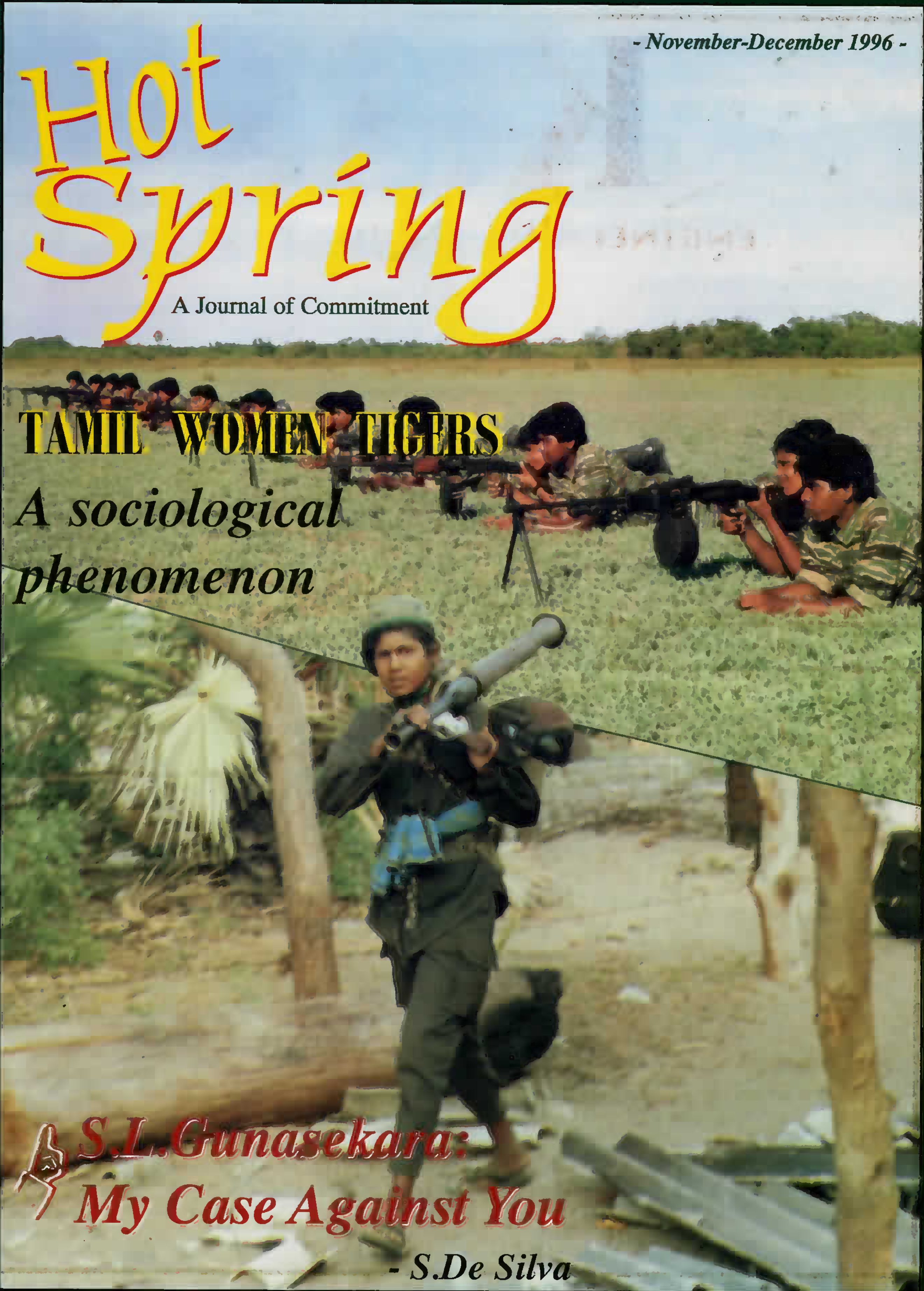
- November-December 1996 -

Hot Spring

A Journal of Commitment



TAMIL WOMEN TIGERS

A sociological phenomenon

S.L.Gunasekara: My Case Against You

- S.De Silva

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LEGAL AID CASES UNDERTAKEN

Hot Spring
A journal of commitment

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Editor
S.Sivanayagam

Editorial Forwarding address
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chez A.Pushpalingham
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From the War Front

Tigers overrun STF base: 50 Commandos killed

At least 50 Sri Lankan Special Task Force (STF) commandos have been killed, and about the same number badly wounded after their camp in Eastern Amparai district was totally over-run by LTTE fighters on the morning of 11 December.

A LTTE Press release says: "The LTTE withstood two and a half hours of heavy resistance from these elite Sri Lankan troops but finally forced them to abandon the Pulugunawa base. A Sri Lankan army reinforcement column was also repulsed during which time government forces again sustained heavy casualties, and lost at least one armoured car.

A large stock of weaponry was captured from the base by the LTTE, including an 85mm artillery piece. The LTTE also captured a huge quantity of mortars, automatic rifles and light machine guns.

Twenty LTTE fighters died in the battle.

The Press release has also listed the various items of equipment captured.

The Pulugunawa camp provided security to a vital highway that leads to the town of Amparai, and was also meant to check guerrilla movements between the neighbouring distrcts of Batticaloa and Amparai.

"We tried our best to defend the camp, but shortly before dawn we ran out of ammunition and were forced to withdraw", injured policeman S.Weerasuriya said from his hospital bed in Amparai. Observers said the attack was reminiscent of the capture by rebel forces last July of the much bigger Mullaitivu camp, in which more than fifteen hundred troops were believed killed.

Ratwatte, Daluwatte survive helicopter crash

A Sri Lankan Air Force helicopter crash-landed in Tiger controlled area on December 7, but the cause of the crash was not revealed. But it was reported that War Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte and army chief Rohan Daluwatte, along with Overall Operations Commander Major General Asoka Jayawardena who were all in the helicopter had survived the crash.

Whether they suffered any injuries was not known . The pilot had reportedly lost control and crash-landed. The helicopter was blown up by military authorities, according to government reports, to prevent it falling into the hands of the LTTE.

Tiger mine in Jaffna kills 6 soldiers

Six soldiers were killed and five others wounded when a claymore mine exploded at Meesalai in Jaffna district on 6 December, according to government sources.

To our Readers

We regret the delay in bringing out the November issue on time. This comes to you as a combined November-December issue with an additional 8 pages. Those who have paid in their annual subscription will however receive their full quota of 12 issues.

"WHAT THEY SAY"

We have had offers by at least two dozen institutions, individuals, governments, and groups to mediate . When it becomes necesary to discuss with the LTTE, third party facilitation COULD be useful... could be. At that point of time we will decide who that third party is going to be and what their role will be. It could either be an internal party or an international one"

- President Chandrika Kumaratunga, interviewed by the, SUNDAY OBSERVER, November 10, 96

* * * * *

" ....We thought differently to most people who regarded the LTTE as ruthless and Prabhakaran as a dictator who could only exist with violence. We were aware of these things. I was aware of the possibilities too from my experience of personally meeting and talking with Prabhakaran for about an hour during our visit to Madras"

- President Kumaratunga in the same interview.

* * * * *

"As an Australian. I felt devastated to read Prashanti Kumarasamy's letter to the President and subsequent newspaper reports of how her family died. I would like Prashanti to know she is not without sympathy from people of goodwill who share her rage and tears. May I suggest to those people , we show our sympathy in a constructive way, and make a financial contribution towards her future..."

- Antagh O'Reilly, Hikkaduwa, in a Letter to the Editor, WEEKEND EXPRESS, Colombo, November 9-10.

* * * * *

"If you are a Tamil, you are charged under emergency regulations or under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Every Tamil who is arrested - lo and behold - makes a confession and thereafter there is evidence against them. This is the advantage in being born a Sinhalese or the disadvantage of being born a Tamil. In this country you will get only Tamils making confessions, according to Police "

- Senior Counsel Kumar Ponnambalam.

* * * * *

"I am not a (Sai) devotee. It is my wife Penny who is. But I have spoken to Sai several times, and he has been of much help to me. How, you want to know? Once when I saw him Sathya Sai said surgeons will want to operate on me for a by-pass and Swami asked me not to do it. As Swami said , the doctors asked me to. But I did not allow surgery. I took Ayurvedic medicine, and spiritually he helped me ... "

- Ravi Jayewardene, son of the late President, J.R.Jayawardene,in an interview with SUNDAY TIMES

International

"I will always defend the non-discriminatory character of Australia's immigration policy.I believe the contribution that Australians of Asian descent have made to this country has been immense "

- Australian Prime Minister John Howard in Parliament October 8

* * * * *

"I trusted him like a brother. It was just that his chair went to his head.".

- Deposed Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto about the man who removed her from office, President Farooq Leghari

* * * * *

"Clinton has problems resisting food and women, he switches his policies more often than Elizabeth Taylor changes husbands, many of his friends are behind bars, and most people would hesitate to lend him $100, yet he seems set for a second term in office in the White House"!

- Copenhagen daily BERLINGSKE TIDENDE, in a pre-election editorial comment.

* * * * *

"If women want to show themselves nude, let them. Those who want to see. will see. When we can appreciate the beauty of trees and hills, why can't we appreciate a woman's beauty?"

- Karnataka Chief Minister J.H.Patel, reacting to protests against the staging of the Miss World contest in Karnataka's capital Bangalore.

* * * * *

"People are deserting me Even those who were politically reborn because of me are not with me in my hour of need"

- Ex-Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, facing corruption charges.

* * * * *

"The annual budget of the UN food agency, FAO, amounts to less than what nine developed countries spend on dog and cat food in six days....."

- Jacquel Diouf, FAO Director General, speaking at the Rome World Food Summit.

Cover Story

Hot Spring
TAMIL WOMEN TIGERS
A sociological phenomenon
My Case Against You
S.De Silva

Tamil women Tigers

A sociological phenomenon

The opening vignette of a sociological study by an American academic on issues of sex and gender goes like this:-

"The teenage girls crept cautiously through the jungle. Blending into the silent streams of dawn, machine guns at their side, the shadowy figures quick-stepped across the narrow opening. Masked by the thick veil of foliage, they waited for those carrying the T-81 Chinese assault rifles. The last to cross were the three with rocket launchers.

"Ready?" whispered Kamir. Eyes glistening, the other young women nodded. Suddenly, the morning's silence was pierced by a lethal barrage. Panicked, the Sri Lankan troops tried to flee, only to be cut down by gunfire from all sides. Leaving the soldiers writhing in death agonies, the women slipped back into the jungle's cover, as silently as they had arrived.

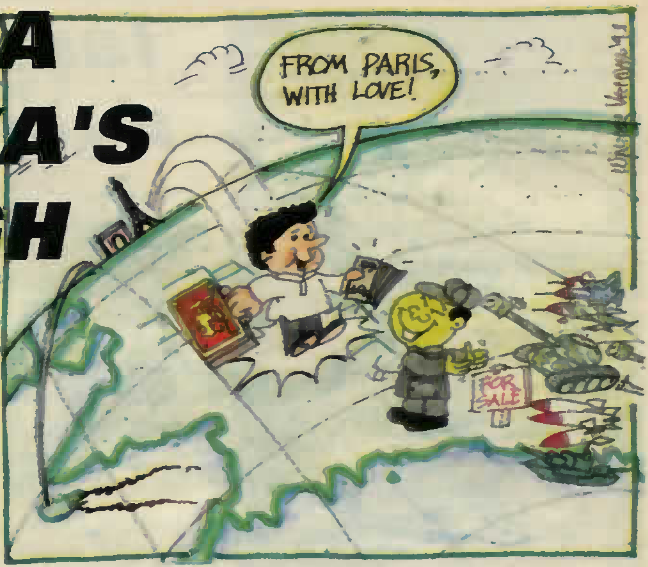
"The Tamils of Sri Lanka used to consider warfare to be "men's work". But all that changed when teenage girls joined Tamil separatists in their armed struggle for independence. . Tamils traditionally believe that women should be demure,quietly blending into the background.But, in the present circumstances, they have little time for such views. Maybe later.

And then, again, maybe not. The Tiger women, as they are called, operate checkpoints twenty four hours a day. They drive heavy trucks captured from the Indian army and take part in active combat. And like the Tiger men, each young woman wears a cyanide capsule maround her neck. If capture is imminent, rather than being questioned by the enemy - and almost certainly raped and tortured, they bite into that capsule. (Based on an Associated Press report of March 20, 1990).

The above is an extract from - ESSENTIALS OF SOCIOLOGY: A Down-to-Earth Approach - James M.Henslin, Southern Illinois University. (Allyn and Bacon, Boston, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore).

The author adds: Fierce revolution has ripped Tamil society apart. of their traditional roles, relationships, and institutions, nothing remains untouched. When the war ends, all will have to be reconstructed, a new culture astride the past and the present. What that new culture will be is not the subject here, although it would be fascinating to observe that transformation. What is significant for our purposes is the role that young Tamil women are playing in their revolution and the way in which the Tamil definition of "feminine" behavior has been transformed.

PARIS BONANZA FOR CHANDRIKA'S PEACE THROUGH WAR POLICY

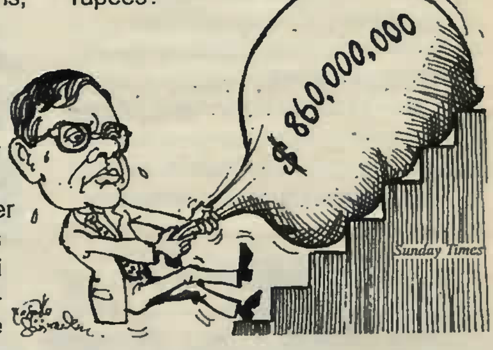


The Sri Lanka Aid Group at its meeting in Paris on November 18 "reaffirmed its support for SriLanka's economic and social development by indicating financial support totalling about US$ 860 million for 1997", according to the Press release issued by the World Bank from its European office in Paris-

The Press release says:

"At the Sri Lanka Aid Meeting in Paris on November 18th, *donors agreed with the Government of Sri Lanka that peace is the highest priority* and that economic reform must go hand in hand with peace efforts. Donors commended the government of President Chandrika Kumaratunga for its *efforts to end the civil war*. Deploring the cost of the hostilities and human suffering, they hoped that negotiations leading to a peaceful settlement could be initiated without delay. They added that reconstruction and lasting peace would only be possible under conditions of macroeconomic stability and economic growth. Donors stressed the need for accelerated structural reforms and reduction of the fiscal deficit to promote private sector-led growth and employment. While acknowledging recent *government efforts to protect human rights*, as well as legitimate security concerns, donors called for continuing vigilance ensure that individual rights are not violated.

It needs a hard-boiled cynic or a reader with a way sense of humour to digest some of the opinions expressed by the World Bank writer in the above. Imagine the donors agreeing with the government of Sri Lanka that peace is the highest priority! One could have understood the government of Sri Lanka - for the sake of grabbing the money- agreeing with the donors that peace is the highest priority. Donors have also commended Sri Lanka for its efforts to end the civil war! What are the efforts that the World Bank wiseacres have in mind? That the Sri Lankan military is trying to recruit 15,000 soldiers to pursue the military campaign? That a massive increase in salary is being offered to new recruits in addition to other perks? Can the bid to purchase anti-submarine frigates at a cost of nearly two billion rupees be interpreted as another effort to end the civil war ? The defence vote climbing at 50 BILLION rupees?

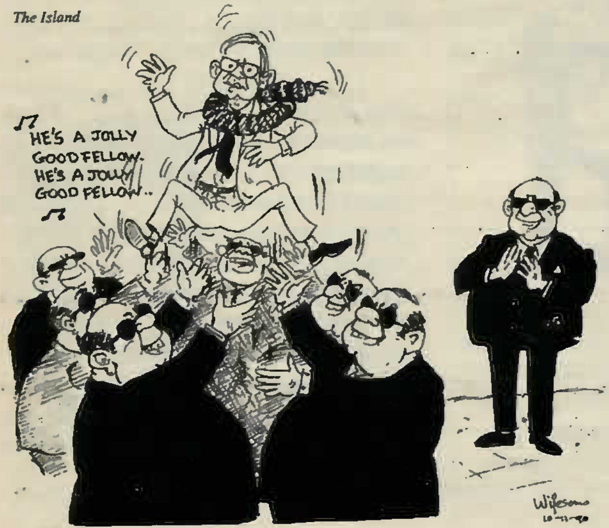


The World Bank has also acknowledge, *government efforts to protect human rights!!!* Ms.Mieko Mishimizu, Country Director, South Asia region of the World Bank, will, we hope. permit us to have a loud laugh.

Twelve donor nation's representatives attended the Aid Group Meeting, including Belgium,Canada,Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan. the Ntherlands. Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Sri Lanka delegation waled by G.L.Pieris, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and Deputy Minister of Finance and Planning.

The Island


HE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW. HE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW..
Wijesoma

PRESIDENT THREATENS THE TAMILS AND TULF GETS INTO A SOUP!

It all started with the well informed columnist SURANIMALA of the SUNDAY LEADER, Colombo, reporting an extraordinary statement made by President Chandrika Kumaratunga at a meeting she had with government officials: She would personally attack the Tamils, beginning with the Maharajas, if the LTTE targets religious places of worship! That was the sum and substance of what the brave lady declared, and she meant Buddhist places of worship of course, not places like the Navaly church or Hindu temples.

The meeting was certainly not open to the Press or public, so how did SURANIMALA get to know about it? No big deal that, because this columnist has a habit of getting to know what happens even at Cabinet meetings - a matter that is of constant irritant to Madame President. No amount of tapping of some Ministers' telephones has yielded the secret of which Minister was passing off Cabinet information.Well, that is by the way.

Within 48 hours of the report appearing in the SUNDAY LEADER, the irrepressible G.G.Ponnambalam (Jr.) shot off a letter to the President. It said:

"I refer to column 6, at page 8, of the SUNDAY LEADER of 20th October 1996, where the investigative columnist SURANIMALA reports that at a meeting you had with some of your officials, you had said that you would personally attack the Tamils if the LTTE targeted places of religious worship.

"From what I know of you, I have not the slightest doubt that you would have made the statement, as I have always maintained that that was indeed your true attitude towards and feelings, about the Tamils.

" This was why I warned my Tamil brethren, in Colombo, in August 1994, to be careful of you. Whilst they did not pay heed to my warnings then,at this moment when, I am told by those very same Tamils that I have been completely vindicated. I demand that you publicly apologise unreservedly to those Tamils who, at a misguided moment, voted for you, and your party, for the thoroughly unbecoming and disgraceful statement you have made, being the President of this country.

"Whilst I would do my utmost to have your statement given the widest publisity both here and abroad, let this be an eye opener, at least now, to the international community and the Tamils in Parliament, who support you, about what you are capable of. I wish to remind you about your statement that your war is against the LTTE and not against the Tamils. Your outrageous statement proves that you have been insincere even in this postulate of yours

"Your disgraceful outburst must surely be the only ground for all Tamils who would seek refugee status in foreign countries in the future besides justifying once again, the fight for the separate state of Tamil Eelam ".

Upset as the President was , when she saw the SUNDAY LEADER report, she could not have issued a denial because that would have made her a liar in the eyes of all the officials who were present at the meeting and were witnesses to what she said. Among those present at the meeting was one highly placed Tamil official who was known to enjoy her confidence. His shocked demeanour at her words had forced the President to declare that "this does not include friends like you".

But with Ponnambalam on the war path and the issue becoming embarassing, she had phoned the same Tamil official and vent her anger on him, virtually implying that he had passed on the information to the SUNDAY LEADER editor, with whom she had been having a running battle. By this time, it was felt that some damage control had to be done. So, the Secretary to the President, K.Balapatebendi issued a Press release, distributed through Sri Lankan embassies and High Commissions, but carefully undated denying the whole thing in toto. The release said: "...Her Excellency wishes to state categorically that no such meeting of officials took place at which she is alleged to have made that statement. Such a statement has never been made by her, to anyone,-anywhere, at any time." The long-winded Press release gave the impression that Her Excellency was protesting a little too much. And it took SIX days after the report appeared.

Meanwhile, others too got into the act, the Maharaja Organisation principally, with the Tamil United LIBERATION Front (TULF)` providing a little comedy and high-level forgery. Bank of Ceylon Chairman Rajan Asirwatham was also dragged into the picture.

Prianthe Seresinhe, Group Human Resources Director of Maharaja Organisation Ltd. (who apparently had no difficulty in concluding that the President had indeed made that offensive remark , including the reference to Maharajas) addressed a letter to the President, which said inter alia, "...it is the first time that someone as highly placed as the Head of State and knowing some of the Directors in our Group, has attached us directly on a racial basis. In fact my colleagues and I (the writer is a Sinhalese) are proud to be working in this Institution which has no bias towards race, religion, caste or creed and which does not practise any form of discrimination even between men and women... .... In these citcumstances, it naturally Causes much concern to the professionals and all others employed by this Group when a statement of this nature is alleged to have been made by the Head of State. Surprisingly, if Tamil businessmen and foreign multinationals who are shareholders of companies could apply non-discriminatory policies and make a huge success of companies, like the Maharaja Group, shouldn't the politicians and the powers that be, and we as Sri Lankans, be proud of such achievements ?

G.G.Ponnambalam

The Maharaja Organisation had reason to get upset, as much as every Tamil in the south who valued his life and dignity. But what made the TULF, now a nondescript group, (except for one man, the Human Rights watch dog, Joseph Pararajasingham) think that it could get the President off the hook ?

In his column dated November 3, and headlined - LIES AND DECEPTION Suranimala wrote: "In the government's anxiety to defuse the brewing crisis, it once again blundered when the TULF was brought into the picture. The TULF was by Dr.Neelan Tiruchelvam's own admission to this columnist, requested by the President to send a letter on a meeting his party had with Kumaratunge on September 19 and the party did to oblige her".

No one had said or implied that the Presidential outburst had occurred at a meeting she had with the TULF. So what was the need for a TULF statement , except for the purpose of drawing a red herring across the trail ? Both the President and Dr.Neelan Tiruchelvam clearly understood each other.

Suranimala adds: "In the rush to please the President and meet a deadline,the TULF "brains", Dr.Neelan Tiruchelvam blundered, and blundered badly. At the time the letter was prepared,the general secretary of the party, R.Sampanthan was in Trincomalee and was not available to sign it.But for Dr.Tiruchelvam, a Harvard University scholar, and a master at the game of politics, that was no great deal. He simply signed for "R.Sampanthan" and sent the letter to the President ".

A Sinhalese call for a return to sanity & righteousness

(The text of a letter sent to the Editor, Sunday Leader, Colombo)

39, Windsor Drive
WISBECH Cambs. PE13 3HJ
U.K.

1st November '96

Sub:- The tragedy of the Kumaraswamy Family

Sir,

1. I have read Frederica Jansz's article in your issue of 27th October reporting this horrendous event. The knee-jerk reaction is to cast about for someone to blame. The very last thing we want to do is to reflect on how much each of us, each one of us Sinhala people, is responsible. **I live in England, 6,000 miles away and am no longer a Sri Lankan citizen. I am, however, a Sinhalese, a member of the Sinhala nation, for which I have a deep, visceral, abiding love. That heritage I cannot, and will not, renounce. It is now an heritage of pain and despair.**

2. I am now 71 years old. I have been a lifelong student of history. I am well acquainted with wars of all kinds and in recent times I have concentrated on guerilla wars of national secession fought on the guerillas' home ground. I have good reason for choosing this particular kind of war - it was experienced by the country of which I am now a national (The Netherlands) in the 1830s; it was experienced and is still being experienced by the country in which I am now resident (the U.K.) and the land of my birth and nurture (Sri Lanka) is now wracked by it.

3. In every war, without exception, each party has blamed its adversary as the aggressor. We are well acquainted with this phenomenon in our own present conflict. It goes sorely against our innermost nature to inquire how far we ourselves are responsible. There is a concomitant, and far more serious, question and that is **whether the war upon which we are engaged is a just war. Our moral integrity as a nation hangs on the answer to that question.** On that answer depends also our individual responsibility for the poignant tragedy reported by Frederica Jansz.

Adrian Wijemanne

4. The Sri Lankan army today is overwhelmingly a Sinhala army. An high proportion of it is an army of occupation quartered in the Jaffna peninsula among an wholly Tamil population. The occupying forces regard, often rightly, the civilian population as potential enemies who could harbour guerillas in their midst or give them aid and comfort in a multitude of ways. The troops have been taught the limits to which they can go in combat. If not the men, certainly their officers are also aware of the doctrine of proportionality and the restraints of the Geneva Conventions. There never has been there is not now nor will there ever be a war in which these rules of war are observed to the letter. It is more in the breach that they are honoured. Every Commander-in-chief of forces in the field knows this. The Sri Lankan army's Commander-in-chief is no exception. She knows, and we know, that the Kumaraswamy family's tragedy will occur and will recur. We take their blood upon our heads in cold and deliberate choice.

5. What is our rationale for so frightening a decision ? We have many answers. **At times we say it is to deliver the Tamil people from the oppression and terror of the LTTE. Can we establish in some rational and objective way that the Tamil people have asked us for such a deliverance ? We have no right to act on their behalf and use their name without an express, unequivocal mandate from them asking us to intervene on their behalf. We can point to no such mandate.**

6. At other times we say we fight to preserve the unity of the state. The manifest reality, however, is that the state left behind by the British, in which their writ ran throughout the island, disappeared in 1983 and has never since been restord. **The truth is that we fight to recover that long-lost state. We do so in opposition to the overwhelming vote of the Tamil people at the general election of 1977 for outright, sovereign independence in a state of their own in the land of their domicile.**

7. As we well know from the preamble to the 1972 constitution, sover-

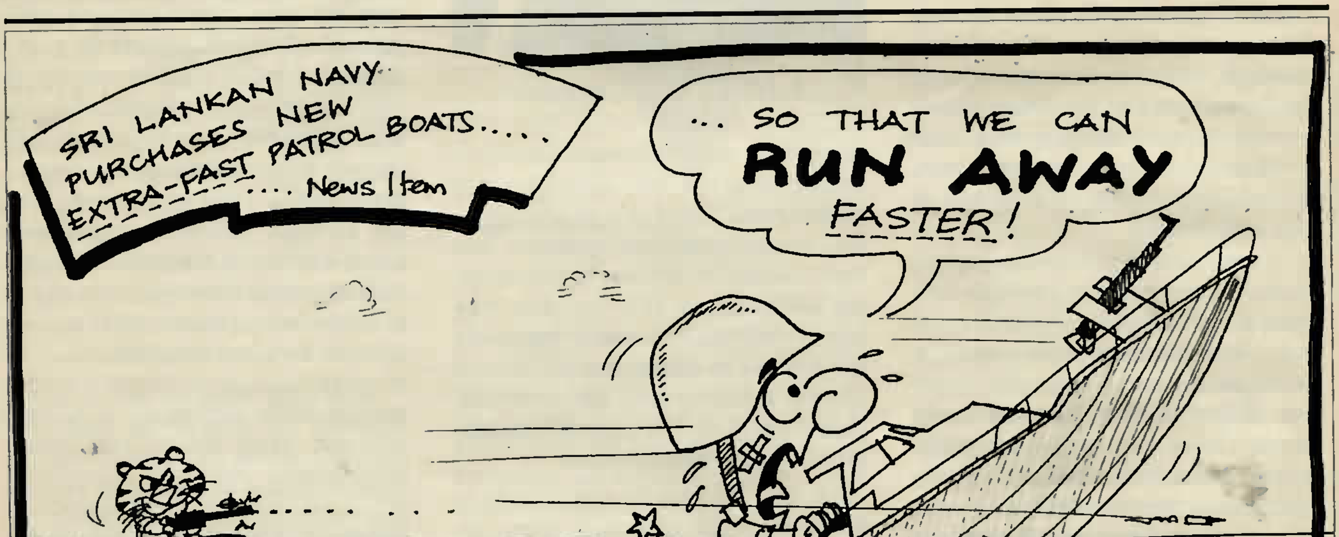
eignity is an attribute that a nation assumes and expresses in the form of a state endowed with its several components. It is not something for which anyone else's permission or consent is required, Least of all is it a gift from someone else for it is not something possessed by others who can make a donation of it. **If it is our position that the Tamil nation has not the right to assume sovereignity we must explain how it is that we have a right to come to such a conclusion and seek to impose it by war upon a nation which has voted for independence. We have neither demonstrated nor established how we have acquired the right to determine another nation's destiny.**

8. The conclusion is inescapable that we are in egregious error morally in respect of the **casus belli.**

9. As for the practical possibility of enforcing our wrongful decision upon the Tamil people by exterminating the LTTE we display an ignorance not second to the immorality of our choice. We believe we can succeed by fielding 10 troops to 1 guerilla whereas in other theatres of identical conflict (Northern Ireland is a case in point) a ratio of 100 troops to 1 guerilla has proved unavailing. The LTTE is the only guerilla force in the world which has a naval capability as well as experience in the use of ground-to-air missiles. The financial provision that the Sri Lanka government can make for so serious a conflict is an insignificant fraction of what is required even to match other failing efforts. A great play is made of an annual appropriation of Sri Lanka Rs. 50 billion for the war effort; even Rs. 400 billion per year is abysmally inadequate for the purpose. Britain spends the equivalent of Sri Lanka Rs. 280 billion per year on the conflict with an adversary (the IRA) who is one-thirtieth the size of the LTTE. Warfare in Britain is six times more expensive than in Sri Lanka but discounting that cost differential it will be seen readily that even Rs. 400 billion per year is nowhere near what is needed to match Britain' failing performance.

IO. The position of the Sinhala nation in this war is anchored in immorality and ignorance. It is only by coming to a clear understanding of this that the Sinhala people can cry halt to the desperate course which is taking them as a nation to impoverishment. degradation and eventual disintegration. **With the blood of many thousands of innocent Tamil people upon our heads, with the death of many thousands of our own on such an unjust and quixotic war it is high time for the Sinhala nation to see clearly the abyss into which they are looking, recognize the right of the Tamil nation to a state of its own, by so doing end the war and return to sanity and righteousness.**

I am, dear Sir,
Yours despairingly,
Adrian Wijemanne


SRI LANKAN NAVY PURCHASES NEW EXTRA-FAST PATROL BOATS..... .... News Item
... SO THAT WE CAN RUN AWAY FASTER!

S.L.Gunasekara: My Case Against You

A review of "TIGERS, MODERATES, AND PANDORA'S PACKAGE" authored by S.L.Gunasekara.

S. DE SILVA

You begin, Mr.Gunasekara, with the assumption that there is ONE NATION on this island (the Sri Lankan nation). Tamils make up only 12% of this so-called Sri Lankan nation, so for the LTTE to demand a third of the island and two-thirds of its coastline is by any stretch of the imagination unjust.

True, but only if your central assumption - of ONE NATION - is well-founded.

How did you arrive at this ONE NATION ? By painful investigation? Not at all. You take it for granted. Then this ONE NATION assumption swims right through your book, untested and unconfirmed.

You call on us to join together and wipe out the LTTE - the perpetrators of the heinous crime of trying to destroy your noble ideal of Sri Lankan nationhood, that beautiful ideal that Tamils have systematically undermined by thinking of themselves as Tamils first instead of as Sri Lankans.

Permit me to do what you fail to do in your book: test your ONE NATION theory. Rest assured, I know full well how important that theory is to your case. You must cling to it for your dear life because without it you cannot claim that an injustice is being done to you. Indeed, your sense of INJUSTICE depends entirely on your Sri Lankan nation being a reality. If there are TWO NATIONS, your case would collapse, for why should not two nations live separately in peaceful co-existence? Oh no, you must try hard to convince yourself that there is no Tamil nation inhabiting this island. You must even avoid talking openly about any Sinhala nation, for that would undermine your case. You must convince us there is ONE NATION ONLY - the Sri Lankan nation.

So you have perfected a clever side-step. You refer to COMMUNITIES instead: the Sinhalese "community" and the Tamil "community", which together form the all-encompassing, beautiful Sri Lankan nation .

And there (behold) you have stumbled upon something noble: your glorious vision of a UNITED SRI LANKA, the whole island its MOTHERLAND for which lives must be laid down .

Sinhalese children must be taught early on to see the unspeakable injustice of the LTTE's evil separatist intentions. Our children must be enthused with the spirit of patriotism, ready to travel northward, a place they little understand, and they must stand there with guns, extra-vigilant, defending the SRI LANKAN NATION from those evil men trying to divide that one nation into two nations.

But what is nationhood, Mr. Gunasekara? Have you thought about this very much ? Let's start with you: How do you arrive at your own nationhood ? Your Sri Lankan nationhood?

If you are honest, you'll admit to having decided it yourself.

And rightly so. That is precisely how nationhood is decided - by one's own conviction.

Now, if that freedom to choose your own national identity is permitted for yourself, can it be permitted to others too?

Apologies for my insolence. I have just remembered that you are a noble man. Naturally, therefore, you believe that everyone has a right to determine their own nationhood, the same right you enjoy.

But does that right extend to Tamils too? Can a Tamil living in the Northeast make his own choice of nation ? Or is that going too far?

Or is your view that a people may choose which nation they belong to only if the nation they choose to belong to is the nation YOU have decided they belong to?

What about me then ? May I obtain your permission to consider myself a member of the Sinhala nation? It's just that I'm not much acquainted with Tamil culture or Tamil literature or the Tamil language, and I feel myself to be from a Sinhala nation and sometimes (I confess) even feel proud of it. Do you permit that ? Or will you continue reducing the Sinhala people to a mere "community" or "ethnic group", instead of the self-respecting fully-blown nation that it is and ought to be proud of?

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And what about the mass of people living in the West going around calling themselves Americans? What's your verdict on them? I happen to know that they are in fact descendants of various European nations. Can we allow them to pretend to be AMERICANS? Can we let them choose their own national identity all by themselves? And those Quebecers - I have tried hard to inform them that they actually belong to the French nation, but they refuse to listen.

I put it to you, Mr.Gunasekara, that you are a hypocrite and a fraud disguised as a moral person. A genuinely moral person, an honourable person, a noble person, would not grant himself the right to choose his own national identity, while robbing others of the same right. That is precisely what we mean when we call you a "chauvinist" and a "racist" because you apply differen standards to judge the rights of others than you use for yourself Can't you see your own racism? You assume you have the right to decide your own national status (you choose to be a Sri Lankan) but you rob Tamils of the right to decide their own national status. So your perspective suffers from a fundamental moral weakness in that it is unfair. I only wish you had the dignity to admit it. If so, you would begin to appreciate the moral poverty of your latest book *(Tigers, Moderates, and Pandora's Package)*.

It would be more dignified of you to come clean- instead of pretending to be a moral man, simply say."I am a proud and base racist, come and join me in my effort to destroy the national aspirations of the Tamil nation". At least there would be some honesty in that.

Good Sinhala morality (in contrast to your vile so-called Sri Lankan morality) assures me that nationhood is a matter best left to every individual concerned. So if you have an unshakable conviction that a Sri Lankan nation exists (distinct from even my Sinhala nation) why not call upon this nation to establish a separate territory for itself also (this being distinct from the Sinhala nation too) so that others who profess to belong to this nation can join you in pursuing the ideals of this homogenou nation. I for one would wish you well in this endeavour if you truly believe this Sri Lankan nation is distinct from the Sinhala and Tamil nations both. What I object to is your denial (or avoidance)of the fact that a Sinhala nation and a Tamil nation exist on this island by virtue of there being masses of people from each of these categories being conscious (and proud) of their own national existence.

> *I put it to you, Mr.Gunasekara, that you are a hypocrite and a fraud disguised as a moral person.*

Now is the time to wake up to reality, Mr.Gunasekara. There are two nations presently living on this island (because two nations say so) and our objective should be to accommodate the aspirations of both in a decent and respectful way. Not try and force an identity upon others that they do not instinctively feel. That is vile. Tamils are not trying to do that to you, so be decent and return the respect - don't try and force an identity on them. Two nations have for centuries inhabited separate parts of the island and each's territory can only be decided by traditional areas of habitat - not on ridiculous population percentages (12% asking for a third") based on the false assumption that there is only one nation.

The fact that many Tamils live in the South should not confuse you. These Tamils are living within the SINHALA country and are not asking for any part of it, just as many Scottish people live quite happily in England without claiming any of it.

Interestingly, the Scottish consider themselves "British" as well as "Scottish" but this is based on a VOLUNTARY association with a larger political entity and is also rooted in a RECOGNITION of Scotland as a nation. Your so-called homogenous Sri Lankan nation can only exist and thrive when the two nations of which it would be comprised (Sinhalese and Tamils) VOLUNTARILY cede their political power to such an entity - i.e., when both offer up their sovereign consent to such an entity.

The moment you recognise the fact that there are two nations on this island (a fact you should stop trying to bomb away) the sense of "injustice" at 12% asking for a third of the country totally vanishes too. You don't have to get upset about it any more. It is not an injustice at all. What you have is not a percentage of a homogenous population asking for a disproportianate part of it, but a Tamil nation wanting jurisdiction over itself. You must get this picture clear. There's no harm done to you or the Sinhala people by this Tamil aspiration.

It is not 12% of a "Sri Lankan nation" asking for a third of it, but the Tamil nation simply asking the armed forces of the Sinhala nation to leave the territories in which Tamils have lived separately for centuries! Now where is the injustice in that? That is not "Tamil racism" (as you and your friend Nalin De Silva might characterise it). That is a longing for freedom. Only a pair of idiots could confuse "se-paratism" with "racism". Separatism is in practical terms nothing more than wanting to be left alone. Racism is wanting to subjugate another race (which sounds suspiciously like what you are trying to do).

So, Mr.Gunasekara, please recognise the difference between the LTTE's Tamil nationalism and your Sinhalese

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racism. YOUR convictions lead you to send troops to crush Tamil indepenence. The LTTE's convictions lead them to fight to get you out of their faces. The racism belongs to YOU and not to them. The bully is YOU. YOU are the one refusing to let a battered and brutalised nation of Tamils simply be left alone. That's all they've ever asked. If you recall, they asked very nicely in 1977, at the ballot box. We said no, as if their request was immoral. Do you honestly think that since 1977 (and especially after the 1983 pogrom) the Tamil nation has changed its mind about wanting to be left in peace? If so, you are either politically naive or (as I am more inclined to suspect) politically devious.

> *Separatism is in practical terms nothing more than wanting to be left alone. Racism is wanting to subjugate another race (which sounds suspiciously like what you are trying to do).*

What I am trying to make you understand (and my heart is bleeding for it)is that your unwavering commitment to restoring governmen control in the Northeast is entirely without moral foundation as much as you try to pretend otherwise. Your vitriolic outbursts are fuelled by nothing more than racism and perhaps self-glorification. They bear no sensitivity to the development and legitimacy of the desire for freedom which develops from within a battered nation.

I would laugh at your moral poverty, if only the consequences of it were not so tragic for both the Sinhalese and Tamil nations

You will only graduate towards being a truly moral being when you realise that the Tamil nation's determination to evict our armed forces is entirely reasonable; when you realise the LTTE is fighting for nothing more than to expel the forces of the Sri Lankan state who are bent on imposing (through military might) one nation where there are in fact at least two nations already in existence. When will you realise that ours is an immoral war aimed at the impossible - wiping out Tamil identity by force.

Mr.Gunasekara, in all honesty, is the LTTE's objective of expelling the Sinhala forces from traditional Tamil towns and streets really something you can denounce as abhorrent, immoral, unreasonable and unacceptable? And is your determination to stand Sinhala troops in Tamil villages really so virtuous? Is it really "moral" for us to try our damnedst to crush any movement that wants to expel our military forces from their homes ? If that's your idea of immoral, Mr.Gunasekara, I mourn for the Sinhala nation which has managed to spawn an "intellectual'. like you; so self-righteous and yet so empty of real virtue.

Why do you not. Mr.Gunasekara (like me) want to see the Tamil nation live and breathe freely, without our guns at their heads and our bombs on their doorsteps? Wouldn't that serve the Sinhala nation better? Go one day, Mr.Gunasekara, to a Tamil cultural event anywhere in the world . See their children singing liberation songs, feel how REAL it is. You have probably decided this is due to "brainwashing by the separatists", but that's because you lack the sensitivity to understand the depth of a nation's longing for freedom and in particular the Tamil people's sufferings at your own hands - hands that are at this moment clasped around the Tamil nation's neck. Your insensitivity prevents you from seeing that those children are not brainwashed. They have a very concrete dream - of their people one day not having to look over their shoulders for a Sinhalese soldier. Of their women not having to fear abduction, rape and murder by our army.

In all honesty, Mr.Gunasekara, I believe you to be a manifestation of the moral sickness plaguing our society. And your writing only contributes to our sickness. And **I urge every reader of your hateful and malicious book to discard it to the dustbin. We must urgently rid Sinhala society of the moral cancer you have contracted and are trying so determinedly to spread.** The only justification for keeping hold of your book is as a historical record of the moral abyss to which the Sinhala nation has sunk in 1996. We can refer to it as a warning whenever we reach a similar corrupted stage in the future.

If I could only teach you of the importance of freedom to a nation. The importance of identity. Of allowing people the space and freedom to live in dignity as they choose. That is what Goodness is really about, Mr. Gunasekara, that is the right side of this equation. That is real morality.

> *Why do you pot. Mr.Gunasekara (like me) want to see the Tamil nation live and breathe freely, without our guns at their heads and our bombs on their doorsteps?*

If you could only recognise for one moment how beautiful national freedom really is. Then you might (like me) want to give it at every opportunity to whoever wants it. If you were a refined

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enough person to see that freedom is beautiful - more beautiful than most things in the world - then you might stop your vicious tongue before it lashes out its call for a war to the finish, until the Tamil nation, drowned in blood, is forced into sumission by our "victorious" army.

How far away from moral integrity the Sinhala nation has deviated And how ashamed your morality makes me feel - and how ill I become thinking that you are somehow trying to represent my people. Indeed, if I pray for a Sri Lankan nation it is just so I can detach you from the Sinhala nation and banish you to your Sri Lankan nation whose morality I cannot abide. For, with your careless rhetoric you summon Sinhalese boys in their prime to killing fields where they will aspire to nothing more noble than crushing a desperate struggle for freedom to which Tamil boys and girls, men and women, peasants and landlords, have committed themselves.

All I can hope is that the Sinhalese be no longer misguided by self-proclaimed moralists like you. I hope they realise soon that the best and most decent way to: live and prosper on this island is to affirm our own nationhood (as Sinhalese, there is no shame in that) and let others affirm theirs, and arrange for each nation to thrive in its own territory free of intimidation and fear.

We should then aspire to treat with respect the Tamils who have chosen to live in the Sinhala areas of the island. That I contend would be a Sinhala nation to be proud of. Have a restful night, Mr.Gunasekara, in your peaceful home, while Tamil children in the North shudder in terror as the bombs explode around them, minute after minute after minute. Write another book, Mr.Gunasekara, motivating our men to fight on even longer. But ask yourself, in all honesty, are you a Good man, Mr.Gunasekara? Are you honestly a Good man?

WOMEN'S GROUPS' CALL TO PRESIDENT TO CONDEMN RAPE KILLINGS EVOKES NO RESPONSE

A number of women's organisations called on President Chandrika to publicly condemn the brutal act of her armed services personnel involved in the rape and killings of **Krishanti Kumarasamy**, but the call has gone unheeded.

The letter sent to the President was as follows:- "We, the undersigned Women's organisations wish to record our sense of shock and horror at the grave crimes of gang rape and murder committed against Ms. Krishanthy Kumarasamy, an 18-year old student of Chundikuli Girls' School, Jaffna, and other members of this victim's family.

"The incidence of gang rape in civilian environments in this country is high.We draw your Excellency's attention to the news that appeared even this week in the DAILY NEWS of 29.10.96, and in DIVAYINA of 29.10.96. It has always been a matter of concern to us that these crimes continue to go unpunished and undetected. This particular crime of gang rape and murder in a situation of armed conflict is even more horrendous.

"The government is engaged in an immense effort to win the confidence of the civilian population of Jaffna and find a solution to the war in the North and East that has drained this country for nearly two decades. How can these ihitiatives acquire national or international credibility when this type of grave crime is committed by members of the armed forces against a defenceless schoolgirl and her family who went in search of her?

"Rape in armed conflict is now being seen by the international community as a war crime which should also be considered a crime against humanity. It is vital that Your Excellency and the Deputy Minister of Defence issue public statements condemning this brutal conduct.

"It is equally important that an immediate and concerted effort is made to investigate and punish the perpetrators of these crimes. High priority must be given to this task in an environment of maximum publicity so as to avoid any possible impression that a situation of armed conflict justifies this violence against victims of war".

Krishanthi murder case put off till Feb.'97

Charge sheets were served on nine army personnel accused of abduction, rape and murder of Jaffna school girl Krishanthy Kumarasamy before Colombo Chief Magistrate Munidasa Nanayakkara on December 2.

The two policemen arrested with these suspects for the same offences have since turned state witnesses for the prosecution. The accused were remanded until February 3, 1997, on which date the case will be called again.

American anthropologist warns US State Dept.

" OUTLAWING THE LTTE WILL NOT FURTHER THE PEACE PROCESS "

Professor Margaret Trawick, a U. S citizen has cautioned the U. S State Department that any move to ban the LTTE in the U.S would be counter-productive in the U. S. campaign to end global terrorism .

Ms. Trawick who is Professor' Department of Social Anthropologys, at Massey University, Pamerston North, New Zealand has sent the following letter addressed to Ms.Karen Sasahara, Regional offairs officer Counter Terrorism and Ambassador Philip Wilcox, Coordinator for Counter-terrorism S / CT, Room 2507 Department of State, Washington DC 20520:

Dear Ms.Sasahara and Ambassador Wilcox.

I write to express my concern regarding plans, under the recently passed antiterrorism bill, for the Department of State to draw up a new blacklist of "terrorist organisations." According to my understanding, any organisation on this list will be rendered illegal in the US, even if the organisation has not violated any US laws. The assets of such an organisation will be frozen, members will be forbidden from entering the US, and fund-raising for such an organisation - even for charitable purposes - will be illegal.

Please advise me if you consider that I have been misinformed on this matter. If I have been correctly informed, then surely the planned legal action is both dangerous and unconstitutional. On the basis of this new law, I myself might be banned from returning to my native country.

I am a US citizen currently residing and working in New Zealand. I am also a sociocultural anthropologist with a specialization in Tamil language and culture. For about the past two years, I have been engaged in research about the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam). Most of this research has been conducted in my New Zealand office, through study of publications and personal communications by and about supporters and members of the LTTE. I also conducted brief, exploratory interviews of active LTTE combatants in Sri Lanka in March of this year. I am neither a supporter nor an opponent of the LTTE as an organisation, but obviously I require their cooperation in order to do ethnographic research about them. Therefore, it could be said that I am "involved" with them. Further, I have addressed Tamil conferences that the Sri Lankan government alleges were for the purpose of raising funds for the LTTE. Intend to continue to speak before any conference of interest to me to which I am invited, including any meeting that the Sri Lankan government may invite me to attend, and also including conferences organised by LTTE suporters. Therefore, it may easily be inferred that I have colluded in fund-raising for the LTTE.

My ultimate aim in conducting research about the LTTE is to help find a path toward an enduring peace in Sri Lanka. I do not think that outlawing the LTTE will further the peace process which many Sri Lankans, including MPs of all major political parties in Sri Lanka, are working to establish. **I also do not think that providing further armaments to the Sri Lankan government will further the peace process, or contribute toward stabilization of the country. Moreover, if the LTTE has engaged in terrorist activities, so has the Sri Lankan government, as Amnesty International and other reputable human rights organisations have repeatedly attested. I for one would argue that the terrorist acts performed or condoned by the Sri Lankan government are both more severe in from and of greater magnitude than those perpetrated by the LTTE. I believe that many human rights workers trying to save lives in Sri Lanka would privately affirm this view. To support the Sri Lanka military by providing it with lethal military equipment is indisputably to support terrorist activities performed by a terrorist organization.**

The United States has a genuine oportunitv at this time to reduce terrorist government has also expressed willingness to engage in mediated peace negotiation. Both aides are moving closer toward seeking a mediated settelment and away from insisting upon a military solution/' (which would mean a fight to the death) to achieve their respective ends.

By expressing active willingness to facilitate peace talks, the United States could play a powerful role in ending the Sri Lankan war. On the other hand, if the United States makes otherwise legal activities illegal for the LTTE'~, this action will only discourage the LTTE from seeking a peacefully negotiated Settlement t to the conflict. At the same time, the LTTE may even gain new sympathizers, if it can credibly represent itself as a victim of US government bullying.

For all these reasons, I believe that banning the LTTE in the US would be a counter productive move in your campaign to end global terrorism.

ARBITRARY ARRESTS, ABDUCTIONS,

VAVUNIYA HOSPITAL CANNOT COPE

Vavuniya hospital is said to be overflowing as Tamil patients are rushed in daily from army detention camps. These camps have become breeding grounds for diseases as they lack even basic toilet facilities or proper sanitation and are packed so full that people barely have room to move. Not surprisingly, illnesses are spreading rapidly and Vavuniya hospital is unable to cope with the influx. Single hospital beds are having to be shared by three people at a time while the remainder of patients sleep huddled on the floor.

Even so, many patients are only admitted by military officials after they have reached the last stages of illness. The Sinhala soldiers manning the camps usually turn a blind eye to peoples' suffering until it is too late. Earlier this week a twelve-year old Tamil girl died after Sinhala soldiers ignored her repeated requests for treatment for septicaemia.

The thousands of inmates of these Vavuniya camps are ordinary Tamil travellers who have been forcibly held for months and stopped from visiting other parts of the island. Their unprovoked lengthy detention exposes the hollowness of the Sri Lankan government's claim that Tamils can expect equal treatment as citizens of Sri Lanka.

NUTRITION CENTRES OPENED

To help alleviate some of the hardships being faced by Tamils in Vanni the LTTE leadership with the support of the Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation (TRO) and Pooneryn-Mulankavil Development Society (PMDS) has opened a number of nutrition centres. The LTTE initiative is in response to a nutritional survey which showed that the Sri Lankan government's block on food to unoccupied Tamil areas is causing acute malnourishment in the majority of children in Vanni. The new centres have started operating in Kariyalai, Nakapadduvan and Nachchikuda-Karadikunru.

YOUNG GIRL AMONG THOSE ABDUCTED

The particulars of the latest seven Tamils abducted by the army in occupied Jaffna are now known. As usual, they are under the age of 25. Miss Arumugam Sivanthi of 2nd Cross Road, Colombuthurai was dragged out of a post office as she posted her application for the GCE 'O'level exam. The other six abductions were of a similarly arbitrary nature. The missing are: Thangavelu Pramanathan (20), a tailor from Variyapùlam, Chunnakam; Nadarajah Sritharan (22), of Chunnakam East, also a tailor; Selvarasa Kopiraj (18) a student from Point Pedro; Selvarasa Parthipan (20) a student from Colombuthurai; Kasithamby Tharmathasan (20) of Meesalai East; and Thangavadivelu Rajendrakumar of Alvai, Jaffna.

Such events regularly contradict the picture the Sri Lankan government paints to its own press and to news agencies based in Colombo about life in army-occupied Tamil areas. Reporters are still denied free access to those places. However, local Tamil residents bear witness to the fact that the military administration in the northeast is becoming increasingly harsh. Tamils live in constant fear of abduction, torture and murder at the hands of undisciplined Sinhala soldiers who are answerable to no other authority.

LTTE HELPS THE DISPLACED

The LTTE civil administration in Mulankavil has opened a settlement for people who were displaced during the Sri Lankan military's recent advances into the Tamil heartland. A ceremony was held which was attended by the Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation (TRO) and a co-ordinating committee of NGOs, together with LTTE dignitaries. Tribute was paid to the memory of a respected LTTE official, Jeyanthan. Meanwhile, over 2000 Palmyrah seeds were planted in Kandawalai by the LTTE administration in co-operation with TRO and the Palmyrah Development Board. The Palmyrah tree is a highly useful plant and its cultivation is expected to greatly benefit the Tamil people who have been suffering for years under harsh economic embargoes imposed by the Government of Sri Lanka.

JAILED TAMIL WOMEN - STILL NO TRIAL

Six Tamil women, all of them having families, are no closer to having their cases brought to trial after one and a half years languishing in Welikada prison (Colombo). The women held a death-fast in July which ended only when they were promised an early trial. However, their cases remain unheard and there are no signs of a hearing in the foreseeable future.

DVORA SUNK BY WOMAN SEA TIGER

Sea Tigers destroyed a Sri Lankan Dvora craft in the early hours of Sunday. Black Sea Tiger Captain Mallika, a member of the LTTE's elite underwater squadron, made her way past harbour defences at Trincomalee to sink the vessel. The Sri Lankan defence ministry refuses to acknowledge the incident.

TAMILS KEPT IN POULTRY HOUSE

It has come to light that one of the buildings in Vavuniya which the Sri Lankan army is using to detain thousands of Tamil travellers is in fact a former poultry house. The Sinhalese officer in charge of the compound, which is crowded to capacity and has no proper toilets, is now gaining a reputation for interrogating young Tamil women late at night after summoning them to his detached office. The inmates of these camps have committed no crime yet have been forcibly held for many months now with no prospect of release.

"DENGUE FEVER" 15 DIE

Batticaloa Tamils are bracing themselves after an outbreak of Dengue fever which has already killed 15 residents of Kaththankuddi. The virus, which is carried by the Aedis Aegypti mosquito, is expected to spread to further parts of the Batticaloa district while in the Vanni areas Malaria is dramatically on the rise. The conditions for such diseases to flourish are ripe as the Sri Lankan government still orders medicines to be withheld from Tamil areas which its military forces do not occupy.

MORE DISAPPEARANCES IN JAFFNA

The latest Tamil victims who the occupying Sinhala army has arrested in Jaffna but denies holding are: father of five, Muthuthamby Kanagaratnam (44) seen being driven away on a military truck near Madduvil Kamalasani Tamil School; Sinniah Somaskandan (25), a third-year undergraduate at Jaffna university, who was arrested by Sinhala soldiers in Madduvil on his way to the university; Jeyatheesvaran Jegathevan, a senior student at a leading college in Jaffna, who was detained at Passaiyoor army camp; Sellathurai Selvakumaran (18), a young student, who was arrested by soldiers at Vembady junction; and Manoharan Subramaniam who was stopped on Kasturiar Road (Jaffna). Parents and relations of these people have been desperately trekking from camp to camp searching for their loved ones but the army merely denies knowing anything about their arrests.

SINHALA COLONISATION IN THE EAST

Sri Lankan armed forces have ordered hundreds of Tamil families to vacate their rich agricultural lands in Senaikudiyiruppu (Eastern Kalmunai district) to make way for Sinhala settlers. Just prior to this, an army camp was set up in the Tamil farming village of Senaikudiyiruppu and immediately afterwards troops ordered resident farmers to leave. Worried Tamil families have referred to this as a deliberate effort by the Sri Lankan forces to extend Sinhala colonisation of Tamil lands in the East. The incident follows a well-rehearsed pattern whereby for four decades the Sri Lankan army, after establishing such camps first, has been driving Tamils from their traditional lands and then bringing Sinhalese settlers to colonise the area.

ARBITRARY ARRESTS IN BATTICALOA

Sri Lankan armed forces have arbitrarily arrested seven Tamils including a local headman during roundups at Kallady, Navalady and Arayampathy (Batticaloa).

MURDERED TAMILS WASHED ASHORE

The bullet ridden bodies of two Tamil fishermen killed by the Sri Lankan navy while fishing were washed ashore in Nachchikuda (near Mannar) on Friday. The third fisherman Ponnuthurai Collington (19) who was also with them is still missing. The fishermen washed ashore are: Alphonso Yokanatham (45) and Christopher Sebastian (37).

MANKULAM HOSPITAL UNABLE TO COPE

Patients are being turned away from the Mankulam hospital in Vanni as the one doctor who runs the hospital is unable to cope with the ever increasing number of patients who come to the hospital for treatment. Despite the government's claim that they are looking after Tamil people living in unoccupied territory the reality is that the Sinhala-dominated government is deliberately depriving these Tamil hospitals of staff as well as other medical facilities.

ARMY TIGHTENS GRIP

In an effort to tighten its grip on the Tamil port-city of Trincomalee the Sinhala army has decided to issue special identity papers to residents from January 1997. One copy is to be given to the head of the family, the second is to be held by the local head man while the third will be held by the police.

The residents will have to pay for the cost of the identity papers. All visitors to Trincomalee will have to surrender their national identity cards to army officers at the entrance to the city. On surrendering their identity

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papers, the visitors will be issued at the army barrier with temporary permits. Residents of Trincomalee describe the city as fast becoming in a state of siege.

DISEASES RAMPANT - KANDAWALAI

Last month, nearly 11,000 Tamils were treated for malaria or diarrhoea at Tharma Puram hospital during last month. Hospital authorities report that 471 suffered from malaria, 421 from cerebral malaria and the rest from diarrhoea, hepatitis and high fever. The Sri Lankan government's ban on medicine to unoccupied Tamil areas is responsible for the disproportionate incidence of many preventable illnesses.

ARMY ADMINISTRATION CORRUPT

Army-occupied Jaffna is ridden with corruption, according to residents. Black marketeers operate freely due to the apathy among the military and government officials in charge. Food distribution has come to a virtual standstill with scarce items available only at exorbitant prices. A kilo of potatoes costs 200 rupees and one egg can be 18 rupees. Residents complain that the food distribution network set up by the government is woefully inadequate with corruption at all levels and supplies out of reach of the common man.

TAMIL HOMES LEFT IN RUINS

Over 150,000 Tamil homes were destroyed by Sri Lankan armed forces in their military operation to capture the Tamil city of Jaffna according sources involved in estimating the cost of military operations. The sources also revealed that no effort has been made by the military authorities who run the administration to rebuild the Tamil homes.

TAMIL FAMILIES EJECTED

Eleven Tamil families have been forced to flee from their border villages of Kudapokkanai near Polonaruwa after Sri Lankan armed forces settled Sinhalese people into their homes. The Tamil families have now sought refuge in the nearby Tamil areas of Vaharai. The Sri Lankan government policy of ejecting Tamils form border areas and colonising traditionally Tamil areas has been ongoing for four decades.

ARBITRARY ARRESTS CONTINUE

The occupying Sinhala armed forces arbitrarily arrested 50 Tamil girls and boys in Jaffna during last week alone. The Tamil youth are usually arrested by the Sinhala soldiers at night and taken away from home while their parents are helpless to intervene. Most of the arrested are taken to the notorious 'goods shed' detention centre in Jaffna where they are routinely tortured and ill treated.

SINHALA COLONISATION RESUMES

A fresh wave of Sinhala colonisation has begun in the heart of the Tamil port city of Trincomallee, residents confirm. Hindu temples, cemetery lands and Tamil homes have been taken by force by the Sri Lankan army which is making way for Sinhalese settlers. Existing deeds are being disregarded and fresh ones issued to the new inhabitants. The administration of much of Trincomallee district has now been handed over to Sinhalese officials hand-picked by the government to eject Tamils from their traditional areas and replace them with Sinhalese. State-sponsored colonisation of Tamil lands has been ongoing since Sri Lankan independence in 1948. The intention of these projects has always been to try and obscure Tamil people's traditional homeland which existed even long before the period of European colonialism. During British rule, it was not easy to find a single Sinhalese living in the entire Trincomallee district.

SCHOOLS BOYCOTT UNDERWAY

Students from 30 Tamil schools in Batticaloa district are staying away from classes in a defiant protest at the Sri Lankan army rampage which recently killed more than 9 Tamil civilians in Kiran. The boycott has been in force since Monday and is meant to draw attention to frequent army atrocities in Kiran in which Sinhala soldiers have lately set fire to hundreds of Tamil homes and caused more than 1200 families to flee to neighbouring villages.

VAVUNIYA SCHOOLS REMAIN SHUT

Tamil children's education is being severely disrupted as many schools in Vavuniya town continue to be used as army detention camps for detaining Tamil travellers. The Sri Lankan government has already broken its promise to vacate these schools in time for the end-of-year exams and there are no signs yet of any change in the situation. The thousands of Tamil travellers who today find themselves locked in camps were stopped months ago by the Sri Lankan army while on their way to other parts of the island.

HANDICAPPED DAY OBSERVED in VANNI

LTTE-administered Vanni areas have observed the International Day for the Physically Handicapped which

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took place on December 3. In Skanthapuram, members of the Association for the Physically Handicapped helped co-ordinate acts of goodwill for those with disabilities while Tamil residents distributed gifts.

MOBILE HOSPITAL CLOSED DOWN

The Sri Lankan government's ban on medicine to unoccupied Tamil areas again took its toll this time with the ICRC-backed Red Cross mobile hospital in Mullaitivu having to be shut down due to lack of fresh supplies. The closure comes as a major blow to Tamil residents who have been suffering continually from state-imposed curbs on medicines. With the major hospitals also in crisis due to scarcity of supplies health officials are getting increasingly worried about the short-term and long-term consequences for the Tamil people.

LTTE RADIO SIX YEARS OLD

Tamil Eelam's popular radio service VOICE OF TIGERS completed six years of service to the Tamil people on Wednesday. The service began in 1990 but at that time ran only once a night for one hour. In 1992 an hour-long morning show was added which in the future is to be extended by an extra half-hour.

ARMY SHELLS HINDU TEMPLE

Tamils who fled from Kiran (in Batticaloa) to escape rampaging Sinhala soldiers were again targeted by the Sri Lankan army in an effort to force them back. Two Tamil girls died when the Hindu temple in which they were taking shelter was bombarded with army mortars. Twelve other Tamils are severely injured. The Sri Lankan defence ministry attempted yesterday to obscure the details of this attack in a somewhat confusing statement to international press agencies implying that the army was firing at LTTE cadres who had attacked the temple but locals were convinced that no LTTE fighters were in the vicinity prior to the army assault.

136 SCHOOLS BLASTED SAYS REPORT

Over 136 schools were blown up by the Sri Lankan army during its successive military operations in Jaffna, says a report by education authorities in the northeast. The cost of rebuilding and refurbishing, they estimate, would amount to more than 100 million rupees. Despite the Sri Lankan government's claim that it is 'liberating' the Tamil people, all its military advances have demonstrated is a callous disregard for the lives and property of ordinary Tamils.

TRINCO GA's NEW TACTIC

The Government Agent of Trincomalee, notorious for his failed efforts to drive Tamil residents out of Linganagar (a suburb), has adopted a new tactic to achieve his objective. With his connivance, the military has opened a training facility in the midst of a Tamil residential area causing panic among the residents. Already 40 Tamil families living close by have left out of fear.

NAMES OF MURDER VICTIMS KNOWN

The identities are now known of four of the six Tamils whose decayed bodies were found together in a shallow grave six weeks after they were arrested by the Sri Lankan army. They are - father of three Ponnu Alagaratnam (33) from Eluthumadduval; father of four Kandiah Thiagarasa (45) also from Eluthumadduval; Kandiah Kulendiraraja (16), a student at Sriganesa Vidyalayam, Eluthumadduval; and father of five Thamu Manikkam (43) from Mirusuvil. The two other victims have not yet been identified.

The bodies of these civilians had been discovered by local residents in military-occupied Thenmaratchy (Jaffna peninsula). The Student Union of Jaffna District has since denounced the army killings and called for a boycott of schools for a week (November 18-25). The rapidly escalating terror by the army is generating unprecedented levels of fear and hostility among Tamil civilians towards occupying Sinhala troops.

ANOTHER GANG-RAPE

A young Tamil woman detained along with thousands of other Tamils in Vavuniya has died after being violently gang-raped by eight Sinhala soldiers guarding the camp. Doctors at Vavuniya hospital say she arrived in a traumatised state and passed away while she was being admitted. Such instances of assault have been rising alarmingly especially on young women who are powerless in the face of armed Sinhala soldiers answerable to no one. The unfortunate victim in this case was one of the 13,000 Tamil travellers forcibly stopped by the army from going to other parts of the island and now imprisoned in un-hygenic detention camps in Vavuniya.

LAST TWO BODIES IDENTIFIED

The identities of the remaining two (of six) Tamils murdered by the Sri Lankan army are now known. They are: father of two Periathamby Thavarasa (32) from Mirusuvil and businessman Pasupathy Thiagarasa (38) from Kamparmalai.

LTTE Leader V.Pirabakaran's Martyrs' Day Message

LTTE Headquarters
Tamil Eelam
27.11.96

My beloved people of Tamil Eelam,

Today is a day of veneration.

It is on this day we venerate and pay our respects to our heroes who adorn our temple of freedom as thousands of shining flames of liberty.

Today is not a day of mourning to weep for the dead nor a sad day to plunge into sorrow. Today is the sacred day of our martyrs.

Today we remember and venerate our fighters in our hearts who have sacrificed their precious lives for a noble cause. Today we salute them for their heroism and supreme sacrifice.

The price we pay for our liberation in terms of great sacrifices is invaluable. The sacrifices made by our heroes for the cause of our people to live with dignity and sovereignty are unparalleled in the history of the world. An epic of heroism unique in history has been created on our soil.

The freedom struggle of the Tamils has been a raging inferno for a long time. Several forces have joined hands with our enemy in a continuous effort to extinguish this fire of freedom. As a consequence, we have been facing various crises and set-backs at different times. We are compelled to struggle alone against formidable forces without support or assistance from anywhere. Therefore, the price we pay for our freedom is immense. It is our martyrs who have paid with their lives to protect and preserve the flame of national freedom. During our long journey towards liberation we have crossed rivers of fire. It is our commitment to the cause that sustained us during these violent upheavals. The cause we have charted to fight for the right to self-determination of our people is right, fair and just. From the beginning up to now, we are resolutely committed to our cause. Our cause is our towering strength. It is because of our firm commitment to our cause we have our importance, individuality and history.

The higher ideals of other Tamil groups could not withstand the political upheavals that swept Tamil Eelam. But no force could break our will.

The Indian military occupation of Tamil Eelam posed a major challenge to our determination. At that historical conjuncture when we were hard pressed by the military supremacy of a world power, we fought with fierce determination without giving up the cause. During that dangerous situation, determination became our ultimate weapon. It was by that moral power we were able to confront a great military power of the world.

We are now facing a new challenge, a new war of aggression. Our historical enemy, Sinhala Buddhist Chauvinism, has taken institutional form in the guise of Chandrika's regime and has been conducting a genocidal war against the Tamil nation. Having mobilised the full military might of the Sinhala nation, it has occupied the historical lands of the Tamils in the North.

The central strategic objective of this aggressive war was to destroy the military strength of the LTTE by utilis-

ing several divisions of troops and massive fire power. But the Sinhala army has failed to achieve this military objective.

The grand strategy of the army was to unleash large scale conventional modes of battles in the Jaffna Peninsula, a territorial region surrounded by sea and extremely disadvantageous to us geographically. The plan was to bog us down in the Peninsula and to destroy our military potential. We were aware of this nefarious strategy. Subsequently we organised a counter plan to fight back effectively the advancing columns and make strategic movement of our forces so as to preserve our military strength from annihilation. As a consequence, the strategic objective of the armed forces in the battles of Jaffna turned out to be a fiasco.

In the conduct of the war it becomes a necessary condition for a liberation movement practising the art of guerrilla warfare to make strategic withdrawals and to lose areas of control. This cannot be categorised as a military defeat but can be regarded as a temporary setback. By preserving our military power and our determination, we could launch counter offensive operations at any place and at any time chosen by us when the right objective condition prevails. By such manoeuvres we could inflict heavy damage on the enemy's military power and even regain lost territories. This strategy is best exemplified at the battle of Mullaitivu where we inflicted heavy casualties on the army and recaptured the territory. This success was possible because we retained our military power.

This aggressive war that has been launched in the guise of a "war for peace" and as a "war for the liberation of the Tamils" has seriously disrupted the peace of the Tamils, reduced them as refugees, as subjugated people, destroyed their social and economic existence and brought them intolerable suffering. Though the Government of Chandrika has been cheating the world with its theory of peace, in practice it is conducting a brutal war against the Tamil people.

Jaffna Peninsula has been transformed into an open air prison. Having dismembered the region into different security zones with defence bunds, barbed wire fences and innumerable check-points, this famous historical land of the Tamils has been brought under the rule of military terror. The incidents of arrests, detention, torture, rape, murder, disappearances and the discovery of the disappeared in mass graves reveal that a covert genocidal policy is practised in the army controlled areas.

The military atrocities occurring in the occupied areas and the anti-Tamil persecution taking place in the South have exposed the real racist face of the Government. Compared to previous Sinhala Governments, it is Chandrika's regime which has inflicted a deep wound in the soul of the Tamil nation.

From the beginning we realised the Government of Chandrika would not do justice to the Tamils nor would it resolve the Tamil national problem. We were deeply dismayed when her Government adopted an intransigent and bellicose attitude during peace talks with the LTTE. The talks ended inconclusively when the Government refused to grant even meagre concessions to the urgent day-to-day needs of the Tamils and gave primacy to the interests of the military establishment. Since the Government believed in military supremacy, in military approaches and in a military solution, it did not treat the peace talks seriously and deliberately created conditions for the failure of the negotiating process. From the beginning until today the deepest aspiration of this Government is to achieve military hegemony in the Tamil homeland and to subjugate the Tamils under military domination.

This approach predominated by militarism and chauvinism has complicated the ethnic conflict and firmly closed the doors for peace. It has aggravated the armed conflict. It has seriously disrupted the Sri Lankan economy. In totality, Chandrika's Government has been caught up in an insurmountable crisis. The international community is now beginning to realise that Chandrika's "war for peace" is not only destroying the Tamil national life but also plunging the entire island into a major catastrophe. To distract the world's criticism from her hard-line military approach and for the escalation of the war, Chandrika is sending peace signals. While issuing statements that she is prepared for talks with the LTTE through third party mediation she has also laid down ridiculous conditions that we should surrender arms before talks. No liberation movement with self-respect could accept such humiliating conditions.

Having unleashed an intense propaganda campaign categorising our liberation movement as a "terrorist" organisation and our freedom struggle as "terrorism" this Government is making every effort to ban our organisation locally and abroad. Furthermore, the Government is making massive military preparations to escalate the war and issuing statements that the LTTE would be wiped out within next year. In these circumstances, we have grave doubts about Chandrika's peace gesture.

We are not opposed to peace, nor are we opposed to a resolution of the conflict by peaceful means. We want an authentic peace, a true, honourable, permanent peace, a condition in which our people can live with freedom and dignity in their own land without external coercion determining their own political life. We have grave doubts whether the forces of Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism will allow such a peaceful life to the Tamil people.

Chauvinistic Sinhala Governments committed to repression and military solutions will not resolve the Tamil national problem by peaceful means. Historically the Tamils have learned this lesson. We do not believe that Chandrika's regime, which is the guardian and the political representative of Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism will bring authentic peace to the Tamils by resolving the ethnic conflict. Because of this distrust we sought third party mediation. We have made statements a year ago, calling for international mediation if possibilities of peace talks arise in the future. At that time, the Government of Chandrika did not favourably consider our suggestion. Instead, it escalated the aggressive war in the North, intensified the ethnic conflict and undermined the conditions of peace.

These are Tamil martyr's graves in army occupied Jaffna which have now been desecrated and plongher down with bull-dozers by an uncivilised government.

The Government may entertain a notion that it has gained military hegemony by the occupation of Tamil lands and that this position could be used as a mode of pressure to its advantage in the peace talks. As far as we are concerned, peace talks under such conditions cannot be free and equal. We cannot expect justice from a Government that attempts to barter the rights of our people with military power as its trump card. It is for this reason, we want peace talks to be held in a congenial environment free from the pressure of military aggression. Our position is that political negotiations should be preceded by creating conditions for de-escalation, withdrawal of troops and normalcy. We are prepared to talk and reach an agreement on these issues.

We do not expect Chandrika's Government to accept our just position. For years the forces of Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism believed in and practised a policy of military domination and oppression. Chandrika's regime too, is functioning under the shadow of military power. Therefore we have serious doubts whether Chandrika's Government will give up the policy of military domination and resolve the conflict on the basis of moral power and justice.

We cannot gain our rights by pleading with the Sinhala rulers. We must fight and win our rights. History has not recorded any liberation struggle that has won without fighting, without bloodshed, without death and destruction, without sacrifices.

Therefore let us struggle. Let us struggle facing set-backs as challenges and victories as inspirations, let us continue to struggle with confidence under any difficulties and hardships. Let us struggle with unfailing determination until we drive the occupation army from our soil, until we achieve the liberation of our nation.

Let us remember and venerate our martyrs today with a solemn pledge that we will wipe the tears of our beloved ones who are suffering under military occupation and repression.

(V. Pirabakaran)
Leader,
Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

(LTTE Leader Mr. V. Pirabakaran's Martyrs' Day message released by LTTE International Secretariat, 211 Katherine Road, London E6 1BU, United Kingdom. Tel: 0181-503 4294 / Fax: 0181-470 8593)

Denmark deportation issue: Sri Lankan govt. loses face

The deportation of the Tamil woman Chitra Rajendran by the Denmark government, her arrest in Colombo, made worse by the harassment, arrest, and deportation of four Danish journalists, by the Colombo authorities in a frenzy of over-reaction, have all left the Sri Lanka government looking foolish , not only in the eyes of the world, but also in the eyes of the Sri Lankan Press in Colombo.

Chitra was deported after Danish authorities rejected her asylum application on the basis that it was not unsafe for her to return to Sri Lanka. HOT SPRING understands that she had given contradictory explanations as to why she left the island. One claim that she made, and which the Danish police were not prepared to believe was that she feared her life at the hands of the Tigers for not submitting to their arms training.

Chitra,who is reported to be 18 years old, has been living in Denmark for the past three years under the guardianship of her mother's sister, Sellammah Navaratnam. Hailing from Kopay in Jaffna, Chitra claimed that she left for Denmark at the age of 15. On the rejection of her asylum application she was detained in prison for two weeks. The decision to deport her brought protests from Danish Human Rights movements and her fellow students, who even raised funds to fight her case. It was rightly feared by them that she could be arrested on arrival, harassed and even kept incommunicado in jail under Emergency rule. Disregarding these protests, Denmark deported her and she arrived in Colombo on November 1.Chitra had no identity card or passport, but was cleared through Immigration and went to a relative's house in Dehiwala. :

Deported, arrested and now freed, but Chitra lives in fear !

After 20 days of being the centre of media attention and controversy, Chitra Rajendran, whose deportation from Denmark caused a furore in Denmark,and whose arrest by Colombo authorities proved their asininity, was freed on November 22. She was handed over to her sister Vasanthi Arunthavaraja who was flown from Jaffna under police escort.

On her release, Chitra said: I am afraid to go with my sister to Jaffna. I am equally afraid of being in Colombo. After all that publicity, I feel I'm living in danger. I hope the Danish authorities will review my case in the light of what happened to me, and give me asylum there and take me back.

By arresting not only Chitra, but even the two relatives in Dehiwala who had taken her in, Kathiresu Rajmohan and Kanapathy Kathiresu, and detaining them for seven days, and thereafter arresting even the Danish journalists, Sri Lanka had proved its erratic behaviour when it comes to observing human rights and decencies.

An AFP report from Colombo, dated Nov. 15 said: "Sri Lankan authorities admitted they had acted "excessively" in expelling four Danish journalists ... Information Minister Dharmasiri Senanayake said he agreed that the entire procedure in deporting the four Danes had been "cockeyed" and his ministry had not been consulted."You must understand that it is a very special situation", Senanayake told reporters. "But I agree that the whole procedure is cockeyed and it has been mishandled".

Sri Lanka's main opposition demanded a parliamentary debate over the issue, arguing that the deportation of the journalists was a violation of human rights and suppression of press freedom. Opposition United National Party legislator Sarath Amunugama told parliament that the four journalists had not violated any local laws and their detention under tough emergency laws was excessive..

"The Foreign Ministry says they were deported because they were not accredited. But there is nothing in the rules that says they must", he said.

Coming so soon after the Krishanthy Kumarasamy news break-out, the way the Chitra Rajendran issue was handled made even the Colombo Press hang its head in shame. One newspaper columnist thought that the government walked into an LTTE trap by deporting the Danish journalists ! Another paper said the fact that Sri Lanka found itself in a (self-inflicted) mess was really the result of a "siniste move by Eelam separatists to tarnish Sri Lanka's image in the West" !

* *

"Comprehensive approach needed to deal with refugee problems"

Chennai (Madras) Nov. 12.

Mr. Sunil R. Thapa, Officer-in-charge, United Nations High Commissionerate for refugees in Chennai, said today that the advancement of human rights and the progress of democratisation globally had curtailed larges cale persecution to some extent. But the proliferation of situation of armed conflict and civil strife had given rise to the bulk of new refugee movements.

Unless the root cause of these conflicts were themselves addressed systematically, the refugee problem was likely to become more and more unmanageable with all its adverse consequences. He warned while speaking on "contemporary refugee problems and international response" at a function organised by the Rotary club of Madras.

Mr. Thapa said that a comprehensive approach was needed to deal with the contemporary refugee problem. Mere humanitariam was no longer enough. In this new approach the countries of origin of refugee flows. The refugee receiving countries and the international community at large must all play their appropriate role.

A specific branch of international law, known as refugee law was in existence today which together with the humanitarian law of armed conflicts and human rights laws, formed part of the emerging international law regime for humanitarian affairs.

The practice of granting asylum to persons faceing persecution was recorded in most histories. It was a matter of concern that even this hallowed tradition was threatened today in many countries. There was a need therefore to spread awareness of the principles of refugee law throughout the world and undertake concerned internataional efforts to stop its erosion.

The global dimension of the refugee problem also led to the development of its political dimension. The enormity of numbers and the intercontinental movement of refugees contributed in turn to rising tensions within receiving states, particularly in the Western world to such an extent that in many of these states the humanitarian concern was giving way to growing racial tensions and political fighting among parties. As a result, many of the states which had earlier helped to nurture the principles of refugee protection had themselves resorted to measures which were restrictive in nature and had the effect of eroding some of these principles.

> *Mr. Thapa said that as a country, India had experienced more refugee movements than perhaps any other country in the world. As of August 31 last year, there were 239,963 refugees in India comprising 108,000 Tibetans, 56,829 Sri Lankans, 53,465 Chakmas from Bangladesh, 20,658 Afghans and 1,011 refugees of other nationalities.*

A durable solution, if it was to be meaningful and lasting must mean their readmisssion as normal members of a society. This could be through voluntary repatriation to the country of origin or absorption in new societies, either through local integration in the country of refuge or resettlement in third countries. Anything short of this could not be durable or humane. Mere survival in refugee camps could not be a solution, as it degraded human beings and was an insult to human dignity. He said that the refugee problem could no longer be considered an isolated phenomena, confined to limited areas of the world. With the end of the cold war and the break up of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, a large part of the world which had hitherto avoided or escaped largescale refugee movements had become the arena for some of the most intense and difficult refugee crisis. The problem had thus been truly globalised.

Mr. Thapa said that as a country, India had experienced more refugee movements than perhaps any other country in the world. As of August 31 last year, there were 239,963 refugees in India comprising 108,000 Tibetans, 56,829 Sri Lankans, 53,465 Chakmas from Bangladesh, 20,658 Afghans and 1,011 refugees of other nationalities.

The Tibetans from Tibet, refugees from Sri Lanka and the Chakmas were for all practical purposes had been recognised as refugees by the government of India and assisted by them as such. It was now time that India's rich expertise in the handling of refugee matter were brought to the international arena, he said.

PROTEST OPPOSITE 10, DOWNING STREET

About 350 members of the Eelam Tamil community in London , mostly women and children, gathered opposite the British Prime Minister' official residence on October 23 to raise awareness of the terrifying situation facing Tamils in army-controlled areas in the northeast of the island.

Women and schoolgirls live in fear of being gang-raped and killed. Over 700 youth have been detained, denied access to their parents and are facing the chilling and unfortunately very real threat of torture, disappearance and possible death at the hands of the Sri Lankan armed forces.

In the northern Vanni area 200,000 refugees who had fled Jaffna live in appalling conditions, homeless in monsoon rain and without sufficient food and medicines.

A delegation of women and children presented a petition to the Prime Minister John Major , asking for pressure to be put on the Sri Lankan government to lift the media ban so that the world can know of the happenings, to lift the cruel ban on food and medicines, to withdraw the military from Jaffna , and to recognise the Tamils' right to self-determination.

A poignant sadness accompanied the dignified expression of hurt and anger during the demonstration. The five people whose release was being demanded -

THE TAMILS
STOP
STOP

Miss Krishanthy Kumarasamy (18), Mrs. Rasamma Kumarasamy (55), Pranavan Kumarasamy (16), Kirupakaran Sithamparapllai (37), Miss Rajani Velauthapillai (22) had all been killed even before the petition could reach the door of 10, Downing Street.

After the demonstration, the protesters marched to the House of Commons where they stood outside for half an hour shouting slogans and holding their placards high. Since it was the day of Opening of Parliament and the Queen's Speech, there were many who witnessed the strength of feeling and the disciplined nature of the protest.

The marchers also addressed a meeting in the House of Commons building and lobbied MPs from the Labour, the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties.

Less than 48 hours after the letter and petition had been handed over, the organisers received a reply from the Prime Minister saying that he was passing the information to the principal officers concerned.

ALLOW MEDIA TO REPORT INDEPENDENTLY
RELEASE FOOD & MEDICINE TO NORTH & EAST

High-voltage pro-LTTE campaign in Chennai

CHENNAI, Nov. 20.

What was billed as a one-day Eelam Tamil protection conference organised by the Pattali Makkal Katchi here on Tuesday virtually turned out to be a high voltage pro-LTTE campaign.

Fiery speeches glorifying the banned outfit and its leader, Prabhakaran, marked the proceedings in defiance of the Police warning against making speeches in support of the Tigers.

A host of speakers chose to mount subtle and open attacks both on the State Government and the Centre for their `apathy' towards the ``revolutionary struggle" being waged by the LTTE in the face of many odds against the Sri Lankan army.

The media also came under attack at the hands of the PMK founder, Dr. S. Ramadoss, for presenting distorted and tendentious versions of such conferences organised in support of Eelam Tamils.

At the end of the nine-hour long session, the conference adopted a resolution urging the Centre to lift the ban on the LTTE and recognise Tamil Eelam and the Sri Lankan Government to immediately stop the ongoing war against Tamils and revoke the economic sanctions slapped on the Tamil areas.

The meeting was attended by LTTE admirers and supporters, prominent among them being Mr. Kasi Anandan, an LTTE functionary and a close associate of Prabhakaran.

On focus was a unanimous demand which found instant favour with Dr. Ramadoss was the creation of a Statewide awareness campaign for repudiating the ``baseless allegations" levelled against the LTTE, extension of support to the Eelam Tamils, bringing under one roof all outfits for raising the voice against the ``atrocities committed" against Tamils in Sri Lanka and bringing pressure on the Central and State Governments to recognise Tamil Eelam.

Winding up the proceedings Dr. Ramadoss, appealed to the Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, to adopt a resolution in the State Assembly extending recognition to Tamil Eelam adding ``let him not be afraid of taking such a step." ``We will not allow any threat to the Government."

If the Chief Minister came out boldly in support of Tamil Eelam, it would also help the Centre reconsider its Sri Lanka policy vis-a-vis the LTTE. Tamils world over were hopeful that Mr. Karunanidhi would extend all support to the Eelam Tamils and help realise their cherished ambition. ``Could there be any greater achievement for Mr. Karunanidhi than this" the PMK founder wondered.

He said that the PMK was the first to condemn the Rajiv Gandhi assassination. But could the Tamils everywhere forget the way the Indian Navy organised the killing of the LTTE leader Kittu on the high seas? An Andhra Pradesh Court had squarely held the Government of India responsible for the killing.

Dr. Ramadoss assailed the police warning against making speeches supporting the LTTE and said that neither he nor his party could buckle under such threats. He challenged the police to translate its threat. ``We are prepared to face any conseuqences" he thundered amidst wild cheering.

Mr. Dheeran, president of the PMK, complained that the media was atempting to cast aspersions on anyone highlighting the plight of Eelam Tamils.

Mr. Dalit Ezhilmalai, general secretary of the party, said that even the IPKF could not suppress the revolutionary fervour of the Tigers.

One of the vociferous speakers was Prof. Suba Veerapandian, president of the Tamizh Tamizhar Iyakkam who said that if ``we say we support the Eelam Tamils, it means that we are supporting the LTTE hundred times." The LTTE suicide squads had set a glorious example to the freedom struggles everywhere, he said.

Mr. K. Jagaveerapandian, general secretary of the State unit of Janata Dal did not see anything wrong in supporting the LTTE and its leader, Prabhakaran and Tamil Eelam. If there was one true revolutionary leader after Cuba's Fidel Castro, it was Prabhakaran who was trying to protect his race from being destroyed by the Sri Lankan army.

Mr. K. Rajendran (Periyar Dravidar Kazhagam) blamed the `Brahminical' newspapers for projecting a distorted picture of the struggle of Eelam Tamils and cautioned against the attempts of U.S. to fish in troubled waters of Sri Lanka.

Mr. V. Anaimuthu (Periyar Marxist party) said that the LTTE had nothing to do with the Rajiv Gandhi assassination and suspected the hand of CIA.

Poet V. M. Sethuraman said that if Tamils world over were respected it was because of the `heroic deeds' of Prabhakaran.

Enquiries show that the speeches made at the conference have been recorded by the police. ``We are studying the speeches. If any offence is made out, we will take action according to law," the Commissioner of Police, Mr. V. K. Rajagopalan, said.

"WE WANT SRI LANKA ON THE WORLD'S AGENDA"

- Labour Party spokesman

Text of speech made by Derek Fatchett, M.P. British Labour Part's Shadow Foreign Affairs spokesman at the International Conference on "The Tamil Struggle for Self-determination" held in London recently.

First of all, can I thank you for inviting me to your conference and secondly may I say, I thoroughly enjoyed my colleague, Mr Barry Gardiner's speech. I think he highlighted in very important language a number of extremely delicate and significant issues.

We now have the technology right.About a year ago, I was asked by Tony Blair to be Labour's Shadow Foreign Affairs spokesperson. When we talked about my share of the world in this imperialist language that we had in dividing up Britain's responsibility he said to me, 'well there are few minor issues; they would fall within your area of responsibility. The India and Pakistan on the Kashmir problem; there's the whole of Middle East and a few problems that exist in that area; there is that little matter of Hong Kong and Britain handing that back to China in 1997 and our future relations with China; **there is the rest of Asia" and he said, I would like you to cover Northern Africa and do not forget as well there is a little problem in Sri Lanka'.**

So, I know this was a good agenda. When you have resolved all these problems come back and talk to me again. I realise that Britain had a long lasting relationship. I would say it was a very deep and fundamental problem that got me to think very deeply about the role that Britain can play as a post imperial country in a post cold-war era. Now, what we have tried to do as a party is to address some of those issues.

We have prepared a Foreign Affairs policy document that will be going to the Labour Party conference next week. I will not refer to that in detail, but what I will say to you in that is we have tried to avoid a foreign affairs policy statement that is sort of an A-Z atlas of the political world saying that Britain's relationship with country 'A' will be as follows and going through all the way to country 'Z'. What we have tried to look at are essential principles that we hope will guide the way in which a Foreign Office under a Labour government will act in the year ahead.

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TAMIL S

Derek Fatchett

I can say that this has posed for us a great many problem and indeed it is implicit almost in the nature of this conference and some of the language used here that we become extremely sensitive to the problems that are posed for us. Let me just explain this to you in the context that is already been referred to and that of Kashmir. I recognise, as Barry Gardiner was saying in this context as well, Britain's historical responsibilities. I was speaking at a meeting on Kashmir two nights ago, when I was personally accused, in a very gentle way that Britain is being responsible for difficulties that were caused nearly fifty years ago. I said that I had won honourable defence that I had put forward as an alibi in personal terms. At that stage the best I would have been in nappies and therefore not personally responsible for political decisions that had been taken. I think it is important that we all recognise that was history. We have moved forward and our relationships have moved forward which I think in many respects in a very productive and constructive way.

This leaves me with one very important conclusion, which is about Britain's role in the world. Britain has a combination of knowledge and moral responsibility to say at the last decade of this century, until next century, we have to play a pro-active role in terms of international foreign affairs. I want to see Britain as a country that has influence ; that uses its way not in a military sense, but in a moral sense; that uses the places that we have in terms of the world's diplomacy and tries to use that responsibility; that opportunity in order to achieve the end that we shape and improve the political map of the world. There are examples of that.

We know for instance that countries such as Sweden and Norway have made very significant contribution towards helping to resolve some of the world's problems. Norway especially in terms of getting the Middle East peace process going and the role that they played in terms of Oslo talks, not just the location but the diplomatic skills and knowledge they brought to that. I think Britain can be pro-active in that way and I think we have to define a role for ourselves that is partly through the European Union but partly pro-actively building upon our past and therefore creating a new future and it does mean I think it is essential that it will be different from the existing government.

First of all, I think it does mean that we define a British role that is independent of that of the US. We recognise that there are British interests and British contributions that can be made. That is not to say that you are going to open competition but it is just to say that we have some thing to do and something to contribute.

I think this is an important difference and the second important difference is that we should try much more actively to shape events and rather than just react to events. I see this is a role the British governing Labour government would like to play. In the document that we produced we talked very strongly about the two guiding principles that will underpin our foreign policy. We wish to promote good governance in countries and we wish to promote good human rights in countries. I am the first to recognise this very clearly and eloquently. There are those categories often have within them areas that are intellectually and politically grey and difficult to define. But we have to promote those overall principles in order to have a moral framework in terms of our foreign policy.

We would apply those principles to each and every situation; the principle aimed to be pro-active; the principles to each and every situation; the principle of trying to promote human rights and the principles of good government. Let me say a word here that it is not a word of warning but a word of friendship and recognition.

Since I have been doing this job, many people have come to me with causes and issues with which I would very happily associate myself and agree. But what I say to people on the day Labour government is elected in this country that does not give us whatever our will and intention and whatever our commitment to particular causes. It does not give us the ability to impose a settlement on reluctant parties. There is almost if I can dare say the word a danger of a perverted imperialism that somehow Britain has the ability to impose settlement on parties. We have not got that and we will not try to seek that. What we have is the ability to use our good offices whenever the parties wish to do to seek agreement between the parties that is last and just can lead to peaceful solution for betterment of the people that live in a particular area.

A United Nations recent study says that over the previous years since early part of this decade they have been involved in three conflicts between states but they defined as 79 conflicts within states. The language was quite precise. 79 conflicts within states, who were then members of the United Nations. What has happened is that we have a new world with those jagged edges of conflict, whether they are racial, religious whatever the background of those. Those jagged edges of conflict are no longer controlled by the influence of two super powers in competition. We now have one super power and we have to look for means through which not through that necessarily through the imposition of that super power but other means by which we can resolve those conflicts to which the United Nation is referred. Now, where does all this general background relate to Sri Lanka?

Let me make three points about what I would see as our guiding principles in that respect. First of all, if I can use two quotes from the contributions that I heard as I arrived. First of all, I have seen myself as to quote "peace monger". Actually I rather like the title and I think I am going to put it behind my name for future reference. It will be on my CV, Professional Peace Monger. I think it is an important role and one of the things we seek to do as professional peace mongers is to look for ways in which if the parties so desire we can use our influence, our good offices to ensure that real negotiations and real discussions take place.

Now, that is not for us than to say that we impose what was our concern of what was then called a just political solution. The fact is that the future for the Tamil community depends upon a just political solution negotiated with a government in Colombo that has to be the case. There has to be a just political solution. I could write to you down a blue print for Derek Fatchett's ideas or the Labour Parties ideas. I suspect that history would tell me that for me to do that will be a recipe for further conflict and continuing conflict.

The only people who can resolve a conflict are the parties to the conflict themselves. The outline of that deal I can see. I can see that there has to be recognition of the legitimate wishes of the Tamil people and the wish for autonomy on the part of the Tamil people. That I reckon. But I also recognise and this is not decent to be critical. I also recognise that passing all the resolutions in all places will not lead to that solution unless we can get the parties round the table and go back to my Kashmir example of the other day. Quoted to me were United Nations resolutions: quoted to me was the similar agreement. We will not make progress in Kasmere as in other cases unless we can find means by which is in the interest of the party to the parties to get together in a negotiating process.

So, the first commitment I will give you is that we are looking for a just and honourable political solution one that recognises the legitimate political interest of all that recognises the different cultures, the different political aspirations. We will not impose a blue print but the commitment that give you is that we will seek to be active with the parties to help that process if in any way we, labour government could make a positive contribution towards that objective.

The second commitment that I will give you is that we will always to be vigilant on issues of human rights. Barry saidin his speech, as he posed a series of very important questions that he said on one side the answer may be no. no. no... to those questions. I think very eloquently he said on the other side those involved in the Tamil struggle have to ask very important moral questions. We would see it as our obligation as well as our right to further human rights for all and therefore to criticise any actions that are a violation of any human rights. That is a crucial principle and it means that not only are we even handed in terms of parties but we are also much more importantly even handed in terms of priciple. So, a Labour government will promote human rights and recognise to the definition of those human rights and it will always be easy, they will be flexible but we are determined to put towards the top if not at the top of the political agenda.

Thirdly, I will give a commitment to you today which is a continuation of what we have tried to do in opposition. We recognise alongside the military conflict that exists literally hundreds of thousands of people are in need of humanitarian support. I am already in opposition, been asking the British Government to book whatever pressure it can on the Sri Lankan government to ensure that legitimate aid get through to those who need legitimate aid. We will continue to take that position because one thing we should learn is that very many people are innocent in terms of their own position and they cannot be caught up in any sort of political master struggle whatever language you wish to use. They are innocent parties and they should not be innocent victims of the struggle and humanitarian aid becomes crucially important in that context.

So, three commitments, which I think are important and part of the contribution that we can make. I was listening, may I finish on this comment Mr Chairman to President Clinton's speaking the other night at the United Nations at the signing of the test ban, nuclear test ban treaty. Hopefully a big step forward one has to be cautious about the extent which that because we know the problems that we have faced and that have to be faced. Clinton was talking about how this was part of a new world order. But he then went on to say I quite correctly that whilst we may be dealing hopefully with a very big issue such as nuclear proliferation. There were other source around the world to which we had to relate and on which we have to make progress. He referred specifically to the Middle East and the problems that exist in the Middle East. I think there is a longer list which Barry quite rightly said Britain has some historical and moral responsibility for but I would hope that the new millennium will give us real opportunity not just upon that test ban treaty but also to go much and to seek a world in which these internal conflicts to use the United Nations language become a thing of yesterday and we can build a different world order and that different world order is one that has to recognise that the post cold war and post imperial map will change and will change in a way that recognise its legitimate political aspirations.

Mr Chairman, we want Sri Lanka on the President's Agenda. We want Sri Lanka on the World's Agenda so that the wishes of all people in Sri Lanka and particularly the aspirations of the Tamils that have been mentioned this morning. Those wishes will be part of a just and peaceful settlement. I believe that we have a contribution to make there and we will make that contribution if and when the parties allow us to do so.

Thank you.

300 persons "disappeared" in 3 months while in army custody - M.P.

A Tamil MP has alleged that about 300 persons ``disappeared" during the last three months while in Army custody in the Government-controlled Jaffna peninsula.

Mr. Joseph Pararajasingham, TULF MP, said in a letter to the President, Ms. Chandrika Kumaratunga: ``Disappearances while in Army custody are increasing day by day in the Army-controlled peninsula. I am reliably informed that during the last three months about 300 disappearances while in Army custody are reported to have taken place in Jaffna."

Mr. Joseph stated in his November 21 letter that six decayed bodies of Tamil civilians had been found on November 18 in the Tenamarachchi portion of the peninsula.

``These are civilians arrested by the Army in the first week of October 1996 and when the relatives inquired from the Army authorities immediately after their arrest they were informed that none of them was taken into custody by the Army. The bodies of these unfortunate civilians found in a decomposed state were discovered by the local residents of the area," Mr. Joseph alleged in his letter.

According to the MP, four of the six bodies had been identified as Ponnu Alagaretnam (33), Kandiah Thiyagarajah (44), Kandiah Kulendrarajah and Thamu Manickam (43). While the first three named were residents of Eluthumadduval, Manickam hailed from Mirusuvil.

Mr. Joseph, who has given a list of 24 ``disappeared" persons, said unless immediate action was taken against the offenders such cases would bring ``discredit to the Government".

Mr. Joseph called upon the President to appoint a commission of inquiry into the disappearances from August 1996 in Jaffna and a judicial inquiry into the killing of the six civilians in Tenamarachchi.

Focus on a Human Tragedy:

An International Awareness Week was observed from 30 October to 5 November by Tamil organisations all over the world, to draw attention to the human tragedy experienced by Tamils in Sri Lanka and in memory of the massive exodus of 500,000 Tamils who fled Jaffna last October.

Rallies, vigils,lobbying and other events were held throughout the week in which several thousands of Tamils partiaipated.

↑ Candlelight vigil, Paris

↕ Italy

↑ Germany

Berne, Switzerland ↓

International Awareness Week

◄ Norway ▼

To
SAVE THE TAM
FROM
STOP
BOMBING
HOSPITALS
TAMIL
STOP

U.K.▲►

Fasten und Trauer Für
Opfer des Staatsterror
der Srilankischen Regier

▲Berne, Switzerland

Fast, Geneva ▼

THE TAMIL STRUGGLE FOR AUTONOMY IN INTERNATIONAL LAW

The on-going civil war in Sri Lanka represents a major tragedy of our times. The civil war has in effect split the country, a multi-ethnic society, into two entities. However, neither the Sri Lankan Government nor the international community is prepared to accept this fact. Consequently, more blood is being shed in this conflict to keep the country together as a single unitary entity.

The long-standing Tamil separatist sentiment was transformed into a full-fledged separatist movement in the early 1980s after the introduction of series of Sinhalese supremacist and discriminatory legislation in the fields of language, education, government, employment and religion by successive Sinhalese governments. Pacts after pacts with the Tamils guaranteeing their regional autonomy have been dishonoured by successive Sinhalese regimes led by the country's two main national political parties which have violated every now and then even the basic norms of democratic governance in order to remain in power.

It was in the early 1980s, following severe military repression and several serious outbreaks of ethnic rioting directed against Tamils, that the Tamil population became convinced that there was no prospect of living with dignity and security within a unitary, Sinhalese-dominated Sri Lanka. Consequently, the Tamils defined themselves as a nation entitled to a independent State and took to arms in their struggle for independence. Since then hundreds of thousands of people have either been killed, injured or displaced in this island of Sri Lanka. Although several similar conflicts have been resolved in the recent past in other parts of the world, thanks to either international efforts or the foresight and wisdom on the part of political leaders of the territories themselves, no such prospect is on the horizon in this conflict. The Tamil struggle is likely to drag into the next millennium, with more human tragedy and suffering.

Dr. Surya Subedi

(T.U.,Kathmandu; LL.M (Hull), D.Phil (Oxon); Senior Lecturer in International Law at the University of Hull, UK.

The recent brutal military operations against the Tamils in Jaffna and other Tamil strongholds have once again revived international concern for the situation of the civilian population in Sri Lanka. However, there is very little international involvement to secure a peaceful settlement to this problem,. It is in this context that this paper aims to examine the Tamil struggle for autonomy in international law. While both sides in the conflict have been accused of committing horrendous crimes against civilian population of the other side, such claims and counter-claims are outside the purview of this paper. However, this should not prevent us from deploring at the outset all terrorist attacks and other crimes committed against civilian population. They are illegal acts which can find no justification in modern international law. The solution to this problem must be found within a legal framework and this paper will attempt to examine various possibilities under international law for the resolution of this conflict.

The Tamils and the Right to Self-determination

It can be argued that the Tamils are not only a recognisable ethnic minority group in Sri Lanka but also a people under international law entitled to the rights available to them under international law such as the right to self-determination. Tamil political leaders have claimed all along that the creation of a unitary single State, Ceylon, out of two historically independent entities-Tamils and Sinhalese homelands - was an act of imposition on the Tamils by the British when they were making preparations to leave Ceylon in the aftermath of independence of India. They claim that the Tamil people have never consented to the creation of a unitary State dominated by the majority Sinhalese people. Hence, they have yet to exercise the right to self- determination even in its narrow traditional definition. The climax of the Tamil demand for the right of self-determination was the 1976 Resolution of the First National Convention of the Tamils. This resolution was the embodiment of the Tamil aspiration for self-determination through peaceful means as it articulates in solid terms the Tamil case on both historical grounds and contemporary reality.

In fact, the Tamil demand for the right to self-determination on historical grounds can be justified since historical evidence suggests that the Island of Ceylon had been inhabited since time immemorial by two different ethnic groups with their own separate culture, religion, language, history and political organisation, albeit rudimentary in character, prior to their colonisation by the European Powers. Indeed, it was the British who amalgamated the Tamil and Sinhalese territories into one crown colony merely for administrative purposes while still acknowledging the distinct character of these two ethnic groups. **The minutes of the British Colonial Secretary, Sir Hugh Cleghorn, written in 1879 appear to confirm that the British themselves regarded that in the name of one administrative unit, Ceylon, they were actually ruling over two different nations differing entirely in their region, language and manners.**

Although the right of self-determination has historically been viewed as the equivalent to gaining independence from colonial rule, more recent international instruments do not seem to have confined the right to self-determination to 'external' self-determination. The right of self-determination could mean the right independence for people living under colonial rule or the right to choose the desired system of government for other people not living under foreign rule.

However, it should be emphasised here that the right of self-determination is a group right available to a people. Although the definition of 'peoples' remains controversial in the context of specific situations, there can be little doubt that the Tamil people of Sri Lanka, a people ethnically, culturally and historically different from the Sinhalese, are a people who are entitled to the right of self-determination under international law. Whether the right of self-determination means the right to secession is a matter of controversy.

However, what is clear is that even if the exercise of the right of self-determination does not necessarily mean the right to secede it certainly means the protection of the 'peoples' from discrimination and preservation of cultural, linguistic, or other values from majority assault. When the majority government is intent on destroying the linguistic, cultural, and other values of the minority group and subjects the minority people to all sorts of discriminatory practices then the people living under such oppressive regime will naturally be forced to seek independence. That is what has happened with the Tamils in Sri Lanka. **Since they have been subjected to gross violation of human rights and a systematic repression within the State of Sri Lanka for the past four/five decades, the Tamil struggle for autonomous status can be regarded as a legitimate struggle under international law.**

The Tamil Problem and the Responsibility of the international Community

Recent developments within and outside the UN demonstrate that systematic non-compliance with basic human rights standards, including gross violations of the rights of minorities, is no longer a matter of domestic jurisdiction. **Accordingly, the plight of the Tamils in Sri Lanka is a matter of international concern rather than a matter within the domestic jurisdiction of Sri Lanka. Since one of the purposes of the UN is 'to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples', the UN has a moral and legal responsibility to intervene in the affairs of Sri Lanka to protect the interests of the Tamil minority.**

> ***The UN has intervened in similar cases of gross violations of human rights in other parts of the world. It is difficult to understand for the Tamils why the UN and the international community of States do not take any action to protect them from a systematic and gross violations of human rights by Sri Lankan Government.***

The UN has intervened in similar cases of gross violations of human rights in other parts of the world. It is difficult to understand for the Tamils why the UN and the international community of States do not take any action to protect them from a systematic and gross violations of human rights by Sri Lankan Government. The worsening plight of the Tamils in Sri Lanka is a matter of international concern and the international community should take necessary measures to recognise the rights of the Tamils to autonomy.

Possible Solution to the Problem

It should be admitted that international law today does not recognise any clear 'right' of secession of the Tamils. But since they are eligible for the exercise of the right of self determination, the international community should recognise that in exercise of this right the Tamils can legitimately seek to attain a degree of autonomy or homeland short of secession within the state of Sri Lanka. The international community is reluctant to recognise that the right of self-determination includes a right to secede since many secessionist disputes do pose a threat to the peace and an orderly international society. But nothing should prevent the international community from devising solutions short of secession such as meaningful autonomy for the Tamils within Sri Lanka.

An arrangement similar to that adopted in Bosnia Herzegovina is a possibility. It is also possible to create a special territorial status for the Tamils in northern Sri Lanka under international law. Such special status have been granted in the past to the Free City of Danzig, the Free Territory of Triste, the Ionian Islands and the Free City of Cracow. What is needed in Sri Lanka is some form of territorial settlement or sovereignty association or confederation brought about under international supervision. Another quite logical plan would be to demilitarise and declare the area inhabited by the Tamils a Zone of Peace under international or regional protection and let the Tamil people govern their local affairs locally with little interference from the centre.

Such an arrangement should then be strengthened by allowing proportionate representation of Tamil interest in the governance of the country by the centre. It would mean repealing all the discriminatory laws enacted by the Sri Lankan parliament since the 1959s and ensuring equal access for Tamil people in education, government employment and other areas of government activity. This would go a long way in meeting the Tamil demand for self-determination. When a country is composed of two or more than two ethnic groups, the attempts by the majority group to impose its language, culture and religion on other minority groups is bound to breed resentment because such imposition ultimately leads to discrimination. This seems to be the case in Sri Lanka. Bhutan has tried to do the same against the people of Nepalese origin and created yet another ethnic problem in South Asia. In fact, the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC), should be encouraged to deal with such problems as regional problems.

The Tamil problem is a problem which has deep historical roots and the States of the region with their knowledge of such historical roots and current reality are well placed to hammer out a deal between the Sinhalese and Tamil people. Single States such as India have got themselves involved in this problem. But this unilateral approach has been counter productive. What is needed is a collective approach on the part of the members of the SAARC and a great deal of persuasion, mediation and conciliation.

The SAARC countries have avoided this problem thus far stating that the Charter of the SAARC does not allow them to interfere in the internal problem of a State or bilateral problem. This stand is not a suitable excuse. The Charter can and should be amended if the SAARC is going to be a meaningful regional organisation for the people of South Asia. **The countries of South Asia have the means and expertise to solve the problems at their doorsteps without inviting the faraway nations to get involved in problems such as this.** The Tamils seem to have lost any trust in the Sinhalese Sri Lankan government since successive governments have dishonoured pacts with the Tamils and they have got away with it in the absence of any international accountability or scrutiny.

To sum up, the international community should put on the Sinhalese political leaders to come to an acceptable negotiated settlement with the Tamils under international guarantees. What is needed here is international involvement and assurance without which any negotiated settlement might be undermined, as in the past, by the Sri Lankan government. A compromise must be found to satisfy the both sides. After all, the holders of sovereignty in any democratic country are the people themselves and various groups of people within that state can share the sovereignty of that State since the concept of sovereignty has always been a flexible concept to accommodate the need for diffusion of power within the State.

QUOTE

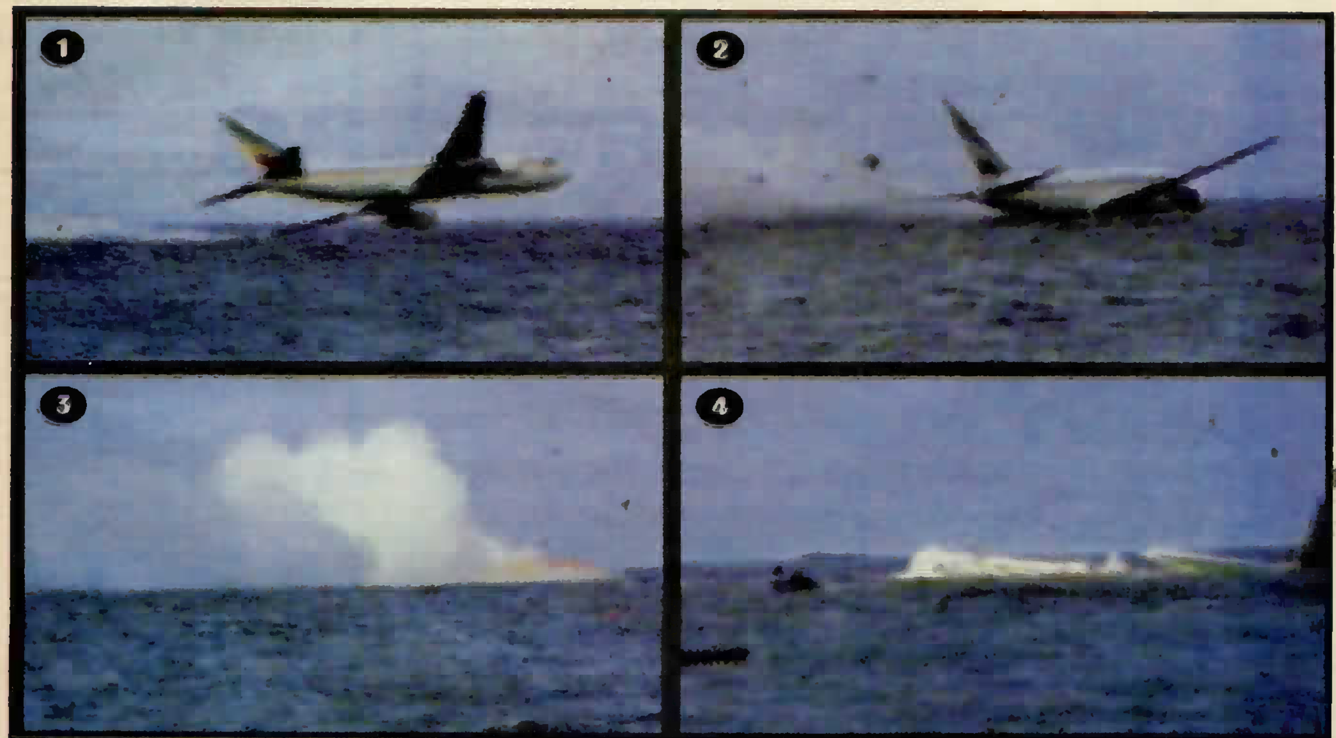
"It is always the oppressor, not the oppressed who dictates the form of the struggle"

"The first issue to arise was in many ways the most crucial, and that was the armed struggle. We spent a number of months discussing it. They insisted that the ANC must renounce violence and give up the armed struggle before the government would agree to negotiations - and before I could meet President Botha. Their contention was that violence was nothing more than criminal behaviour that could not be tolerated by the state.

"I responded that the state was responible for the violence, and that it is always the oppressor, not the oppressed, who dictates the form of the struggle. If the oppressor uses violence, the oppressed have no alternative but to respond violently. In our case, it was simply a legitimate form of self-defence. I ventured that if the state decided to use peaceful methods, the ANC would also use peaceful means. "It is up to you", I said, "not us, to renounce violence"

- President Nelson Mandela,
in his autobiography LONG WALK TO FREEDOM.

Nine Tamils in search of a better life die in a plane crash



Anatomy of a tragedy : A South African vacationer's video camera captured the moment as the jetliner (1) caught a wing, (2) hit the sea; (3) smashed to a halt, and (4) broke into pieces, which began to sink as rescuers rushed to help survivors.

Nine Tamils from Sri Lanka, seeking asylum in Western countries, died when the highjacked Ethiopian airliner in which they were travelling crashed into the sea off the Indian ocean island of Comoros on November 23 127 out of the 175 passengers were killed.

The victims were: Thushyanthan Kanagaratnam (21)from Trincomalee Miss Anushya Thangavelu (17) Anbarasi Seenivasagam (22) and Puviyalagan Seenivasagam (21) Mr.Sellathamby, Mr.S.Balakrishnan Ms.Paramalingmm and Ms. Nallanathan. The ninth name was not known.

All nine had boarded a Singapore-bound flight from Colombo on November 19, and from there they had purchased tickets bound for Lagos, Nigeria. However, upon arrival in Lagos via Dubai,theyhad been deported and sent to Bombay. Indian authorities there refused them entry and sent them back in the same flight back to Lagos. Three hijackers are reported to have stormed into the cockpit soon after the plane took off and demanded that they be taken to Australia. They refused to allow the pilot to stop to refuel, and the pilot ditched the plane into the sea, 500 metres off a tourist beach.

Thushyanthan was to join his father, Kanagaratnam, in Switzerland His mother in Trincomalee was reported to be in a state of shock on hearing the news of the crash. Anushya Thangavelu was going to Switzerland to marry her boy friend, who had made all the arrangements for her travel. She and her mother had travelled from Atchuveli in Jaffna to Colombo, and Anushya had left with great hopes of helping the family once she settled down. The only remaining daughter of the Thangavelus is reported to be in the Kilinochchi refugee camp.

To Mrs. Seenivasagam of Navatkuli. it was a tragedy twice over. She lost both her son Puviyalagan whose destination was Germany and her daughter Anbarasi. Anbarasi who was trained as a nurse in Jaffna had assured her mother that she and her brother would soon settle all the family debts and see that their youngersisters are married well. All these hopes were dashed off the Comoros island, four days after they said their farewells in Colombo.

(Pictures: *NEWSWEEK*)

OPENING OF TAMIL SCHOOL IN LONDON

Mr. Barry Gardiner speaks. Also seen in the picture. are Mr. C.J.T. Thamotheram and Mrs. Guna Velupillai

An enthusiastic crowd of Tamils participated in the opening of a Tamil School in Kingsbury, London on 27 October 1996. The school was officially opened by the well known veteran and community leader, Mr. C.J.T. Thamotheram.

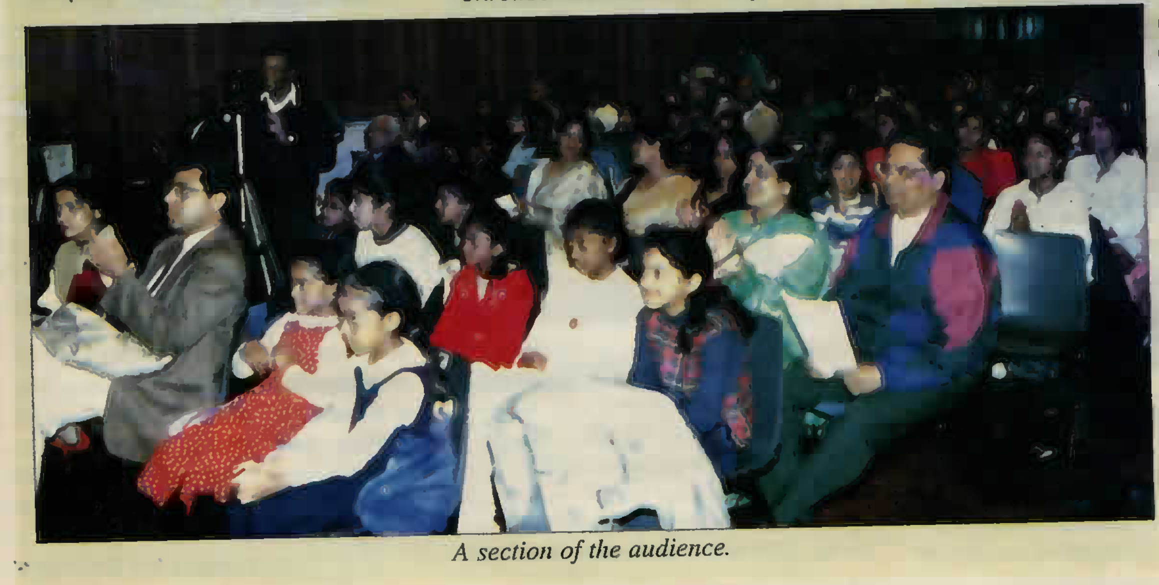
Mr. Barry Gardiner (Labour Party Candidate for Brent North), Mr. Vasantha Rajah, author of " Mass Exodus " and Dr. P. V. Kumar (local General Practitioner) were the other distinguished speakers at the ceremony. The speech of Mr. Barry Gardiner to the children was well received and found interesting by everyone who listened.

This is the first school to be managed by a constituency Tamil Association. The Chairman of the Association, Mr. S. Paramalingam, a leading solicitor in London said, " the day to day functioning of the school will be vested with the Head Teacher".

The school will be known as " The Tamil School - Kingsbury ". Mrs. Guna Velupillai has been appointed as Head Teacher. Tamil Language, Religion, Vocal, Veena, Miruthangam, Flute, Bharathanatyam and Science subjects for G.C.E O Levels and A Levels Students will be taught at the school. On the first day, over 75 students enrolled for various subjects. The Head Teacher in a boyant mood anticipated the student number will double in January 1997 when the new term starts after Christmas.

The Tamil syllabus also covers an elaborate history of Sri Lankan Tamils.

The Secretary of the Association, Mr. R. Jayadevan said, "It is essential to teach the Tamil children born in this country their historical roots in Sri Lanka, otherwise as time passes the future generation will forget their History".


A section of the audience.

British M.P. Pledges support for the Tamil liberation struggle

British Liberal Democrat MP, **Simon Hughes,** has unambiguously expressed his support for the Tamil liberation struggle being waged against the government of Sri Lanka. Mr. Hughes, MP for Southwark and Bermondsey in London, was forthright in his condemnation of the Sri Lankan govenment's callous military strategy against the Tamil people and he made a serious comitment to assist Tamils to achieve their just rights as a nation. He also expressed his anger towards the human rights violations on Tamil people by the Sri Lankan military especially depriving the children, nursing mothers, sick and the elderly of food, medicine and shelter and thus violating international law of armed conflict by a democratic country.The government of Sri Lanka is getting away with murders, he said.

(left to right) Dr. Jeyaraja, Miss. Mann and Simon Hughes

A section of the audience

In a packed meeting organised by **Miss. Mann** from Tamil Centre for Human Rights (TCHR) at Eelam House situated in Bermondsey, South East of London, the high profile MP explained that he approached the Sri Lankan situation with the benefit of his considerable experience as an international human rights lawyer. He maintained that Tamils have right to self-determination under international law.

He went on to promise that he would do everything in his power to put pressure on the British government to change its policy towards Sri Lanka, especially in the area of aid. Mr. Hughes spoke of his long involvement in the ANC's struggle for democracy in the former South Africa and he suggested that the LTTE, too, was fighting a legitimate struggle and could not be branded a 'terrorist' organisation.

Mr.Hughes was welcomed with traditional flower garland and shown around Eelam house and was very impressed with the activities there. He further said that he was happy to be with the oppressed people and will endeavour to work towards the freedom of the Tamil people.

Miss. Mann thanked him for enabling TCHR to lobby the MPs in the Parliament at Westminster on 23rd of October 1996 following a demonstration in front of No.10 Downing street demanding urgent action on Sri Lanka to cease military offensive and human rights violations on Tamil people. Such presssure had produced results as Kirishanthy and her family's death were brought to light immediately and there was a brief relaxation of allowing people to pass through at the northern army check point.

Dr. Jegaraja spoke of continuous violation of human rights of the Tamil people since independence of Ceylon from British rule. The Tamils, he said were fighting for justice not for any favours and they were privileged and relieved to know that Mr. Hughes identified himself with the Tamil freedom struggle and feels their pain and sufferings as his own.

Mr.Shanthan thanked the MP for his visit to Eelam House and said that the Eelam House will be serving the interests of the Tamil people appreciating his interest in assisting the just struggle of the Tamil people for justice and freedom from its oppressors. He also answered questions from the audience present.

Paris killings the work of paid assasins ?

The gunning down of LTTE activist K.Perinpanathan (Nathan) and K.Gajendran (Gajan) the Editor of the Tamil weekly EELAMURASU at La Chappele in Paris on 26 October is believed to have been the work of one or more paid assassins.

The murders took place around 7 p.m. in an area frequented by Tamils, and very close to a Tamil video shop. The risk of detection being therefore high, it is believed that big money must have passed hands in order to make the risk worthwhile.

Thousands of Tamils paid their last respects to the two slain men, both when the bodies were kept for public view as well as at the burial, when public grief was very evident.

LTTE leader's message

LTTE leader V.Prapakaran in a condolence message said (the English translation).

"I am extremely sad and distressed to learn that two Paris based functionaries to whom the Tamil liberation movement owes a great deal have been gunned down by our enemy.

"Mr.Kandiah Perinpanathan (Nathan) was a senior member of our liberation organisation, an honest worker for the cause and devoted to the ideals of liberation. He has served long as an officer in charge of international fund raising, travelled to various countries and has rendered yeoman service.

"Mr.Kandiah Gajendran (Gajan) worked as a publicist for the Tamil Eelam cause and as Editor of the Tamil weekly - the Eela Murasu - built up a wide readership for the paper among Tamil expatriates in several European countries. He was known for his rational and courageous views and his death at the hands of assasins is a tremendous loss for Tamil journalism.

"It is an internationally known fact that the chauvinistic Sinhala government is seriously engaged in a planned mission to destroy the ever increasing international support which our organisation is receiving, and to destabilise the international structure of our liberation movement which has grown widely and spread its branches everywhere. The government of Sri Lanka is openly engaged in Herculean task of crushing the freedom struggle of the Tamils by securing the proscription of our organisation in foreign countries and by blocking the contributions we receive from the expatriate Tamil community. The International Community is pretty aware that the activities of the Sri Lankan diplomatic missions overseas are aimed at achieving the above purpose. Upon realising that such activities have failed to achieve the objective, the Sri Lankan government has now resorted to nasty and mean tactics.

"The state sponsored terrorism of the Sri Lankan government has now crossed national boundaries and international waters to perpetrate atrocities against the Tamils in foreign countries as well. The International Community should try to identify the perpetrators of this cruel and dastardly act. We consider these killings as manifestations of our enemy's impotence and weakness. This is a challenge thrown at the world Tamil community that continues to lend its support to us. I request the world Tamils to take this challenge and to continue to support the liberation struggle with fortitude.

"This is a very serious testing time for us during when we should bear up the calamitous sufferings and continue our mission carefully and firmly without swerving. I pay my heart-felt respect and homage to the two brave souls who worked relentlessly and gave their lives for the ideal of liberation."

Vasantha Rajah's book in Tamil

An updated Tamil-language edition of Vasantha Rajah's book, TAMIL EXODUS AND BEYOND is now available. The translation was aarried out by Mr.Shankar Moorthy who was the former head of the BBC "Tamil Oosai" programme.

The English edition of this book attracted a lot of critical acclaim. The military analyst of the SUNDAY TIMES, (Sri Lanka) described it as "an important historical document that must be read from cover to cover by President Chandrika Kumaratunga".

HOT SPRING readers interested in purchasing the book are requested to send their cheques or postal orders to Rajah Publishers, 56, Iberia House, New Orleans Walk, London N19 3TY. The book is priced at : UK-£5.00: Europe-£6.00 (sterling only) USA, Canada, Australia -£7.00 (sterling only).

The book is also available at London Tamil shops.

The War Drums are Sounded:

Rabindranath Tagore 1942

HOT SPRING reader Charles Somasundrum of North Harrow, Middlesex sends us this poem by Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore, which he says, "though published in 1942, is applicable to the Sri Lanka/Eelam war today":

The war drums are sounded.
Men force their features into frightfulness
and gnash their teeth;
and before they rush out to gather raw
human flesh for death's larder,
they march to the temple ofBuddha, the compassionate,
to claim his blessings,
while loud beats the drum rat-a-tat
and earth trembles.

They pray for success;
for they must raise weeping and wailing
in fheir wake, sever ties of love,
plant flags on the ashes of desolated
homes,
devastate the centres af culture
and shrines of beautv,
mark red with blood their traf l
across green meadows and populous
markets,
and so they march to the temple of
Buddha, the compassionate,
to claim his blessinigs,
while laud beats the drum rat-a-tat
and earth trembles.

They will punctuate each thousand of
the maimed and killed
with the trumpeting of their triumph,
arouse demon's mirth at the sight
of the limbs torn bleeding from women
and children;
and they pray that they may befog minds
with untruths
and poison God 's sweet air of breath,
and therefore they march to the temple
of Buddha, the compassionate,
to claim his blessings,
while loud beats the drum rat-a-tat
and earth trembles.

first published in Februarv 1942 yet
applicable ta Sri l.anka today

FRAUD OR GAMESMANSHIP?

Is the SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT SERIOUS ABOUT SOLVING the TAMIL PROBLEM

The Sri Lankan foreign minister recently tried to persuade the British Foreign Minister to ban the LTTE in BRITAIN. This must be regraded as an effort on their part to have the LTTE outlawed internationally. The government, is engaged in a struggling effort to convince the world that the LTTE and the TAMIL people have differing goals. They claim that the LTTE does not represent aspirations of the TAMIL PEOPLE.

They also claim that they have offered more autonomy to the people of the region than its predecessor in office. They claim further that the TAMIL people with the exception of the LTTE are ready to accept their generous offer. They also continue to insist on their right to retain a UNITARY STATE.

Let us examine each of these briefly. If the L.T.T.E were outlawed, who would the SRI LANKAN negotiate a peace agreement with? Up to now, they have recognized that the current war is between them and the L.T.T.E. Up to now, they have recognized that any peace negotiation had to be between them and the LTTE. What then do they hope to achieve by this new sinister twist in their policy? Negotiate with the TAMIL GROUPS in COLOMBO and stop the war? They could do that now. and what will they achieve?

Do they think that by this process that they will convince the world that the LTTE does not represent the TAMIL PEOPLE? Even if they succeeded in this absurd propaganda ploy, what do they achieve? Get more foreign arms and ammo to quash the TAMIL STRUGGLE? If they succeed in achieving a military victory, will they then yet concede the TAMIL-MUSLIM right to a degree of autonomy in the NORTHEAST.? Will they recognize that the desire for autonomy is not an LTTE invention separate and apart from the people in the region? Do they hope to ram the present proposals down the throats of the NORTHEASTENERS by winning a war, because they have convinced themselves that this is what the people of the NORTHEAST want? Are they going to continue to turn their heads away from reality or face it?

WAKELEY PAUL

By their latest REGIONAL COUNCIL proposals they have recognized three facts.1] The fact that the rights of the people of the NORTHEAST have not been given proper recognition under the present constitution, [2] The fact that these people have different aspirations from the rulers of the SINHALA dominated central government, and [3] The fact that they therefore are entitled to some degree of autonomy, freeing them to some degree from the central control now exercised over them.

This raises one crucial question? How much control does the government want to retain over the people of this region by their insistence on retaining a UNITARY STATE?

There lies the rub. The clue to that problem lies in what I will term the REVERSIONARY CLAUSE of the REGIONAL COUNCIL BILL. Let us analyze this and the similar clause in the PROVINCIAL COUNCIL BILL [THE XIII AMENDMENT] of the previous government and ask the question, what have they offered us? Have they offered us anything more than the last government did? If not, why do they expect us to accept what was rejected earlier ? This in turn leads to the next question, can any self respecting representative of a people who have fought for over 20 years to achieve a separate state accept this offer of autonomy ? Or will this if accepted, amount to the Ultimate surrender to unbridled Sinhala central control over this region for ever? In short, will we be back to where we were before the war began? Is the end result that the government has retained all of its previous powers over the people of this region?

Is that in fact not what the Sinhala people want? Is that not in fact what the inhabitants of the NORTHEAST have resisted and fought against? In short, whose aspirations did they satisfy by this offer? Theirs or ours? What was the object of the PEACE NEGOTIATIONS and the LEGISLATION PROPOSED? To maintain the STATUS QUO or seek a solution to the CONFLICT?

The present REGIONAL COUNCIL BILL states in 26 [4] [a] that, "if the President is satisfied that a situation has risen in which the regional administration is engaging in an intentional violation of the Constitution which constitutes a clear and present danger to the Unity and sovereignty of the Republic, the President may assume to himself aD or any of the functions of the region or dissolve the regional council in these circumstances"

By this provision, Sovereignty rests with the CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. If we act out of step in their view, we lose what we have got. Are we any more autonomous than we have been before? What kind of autonomy is this? You remain all powerful, and we remain subject to that power. This is where devolution under a unitary constitution is meaningless in this context. It may be appropriate for the Sinhalese in Sinhalese provinces. It is meaningless nonsense in the context of the TAMIL struggle for autonomy from Sinhala domination.

154 L of the XIII AMENDMENT [PROVINCIAL COUNCIL BILL] of the JAYAWARDENA GOVERNMENT had a similar provision. There it said "if the President from a report of the govemor of the province [his nominee] or otherwise is satisfied that the administration cannot be carried on under the provisions of the Constitution, the President may by proclamation assume to himself any and all functions of the administration of the province etc etc.

Is the provision in the present REGIONAL COUNCIL BILL anything more than an echo its counterpart in the PROVINCIAL COUNCIL BILL of the previous regime ? .Has this government offered us anything more than they did ? Both reflect the Sinhala desire to cling to what they have. They have no desire to unleash the TAMILS AND MUSLIMS from their grip.That is behind the insistence on maintaining an UNITARY CONSTITUTION. This problem cannot be solved by this process. One needs a FEDERAL CONSTITUTION. No Sinhala govemment has the capacity to grant this.Sinhala sentiment is opposed to releasing anyone from their hold. The Tamils and Muslims will have to oust them from their homelands to achieve the autonomy they so sorely need

The time has come for the international World to recognize this. They must put an end to being influenced by the unending and continuing bluff of successive Sinhala govemments that they have a bona fide solution to this problem . They do not and never will.

Sri Lanka on a frantic search for 15,000 army deserters

COLOMBO, Nov 30 AFP) - Sri Lanka is set to launch a major search within and beyond its) - shores for thousands of army deserters ahead of a showdown with separatist Tamil Tiger guerrillas, officials said Saturday.

The crackdown code-named "Operation Oesert Ratt". is to begin Sunday at the end of an amnesty for those voluntarily returning to their units, a defence ministry official said.

"Village officials will assist in the search at the grass roots level," the official said. "We have also the identity details of those who have gone abroad for employment, and action will be taken to bring them back."

State radio and television repeated warnings that those employing or harb ouring deserters will be arrested and urged troopers who are absent without leave to report back for work.

Military spokesman Tissa Jayatunga said the government was eager for the return of the thousands of deserters in a bid to boost the campaign against the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

"We have a ready-made force if we get the deserters to Come back because unlike a new recruit, they already have undergone training and can be deployed in the battle field," Jayatunga said.

He said nearly half of the 30,000 security personnel who abandoned their posts returned to take advantage of an amnesty under which no questions were asked and no disciplinary action was taken against them.

Sri Lankan security forces, who number a little more than 100,000, have wrested large areas from Tamil Tiger guerrillas in the island's north but lack the strength needed to hold the new territory under their control.

"If we have another 30,000 men we can flush out the Tigers from the key population centres and open a main supply route over land to Jaffna," an army field commander said.

In a bid to boost the military campaign, the government has put in place a scheme to re-employ soldiers retired from service but who are under the age of 57.

Search on for new recruits too

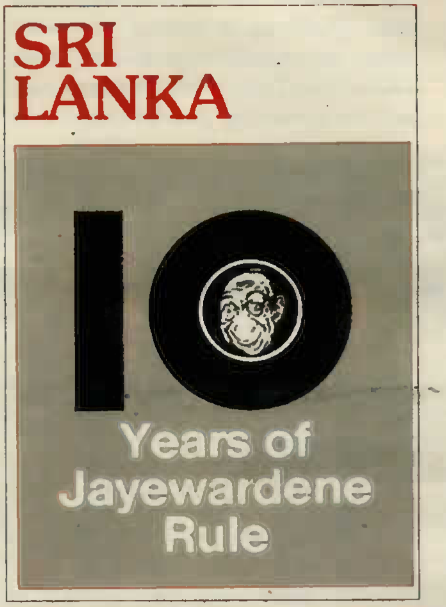
The Sri Lankan military has begun an exercise to recruit15,000 soldiers to pursue the military campaign against the LTTE, the Army Commander, Lt. Gen. Rohan Daluwatte announced on October 19. In an impassioned appeal to the youth to join the army, Gen. Daluwatte was quoted as saying: ``We have all the latest arms and combat equipment, some of which we have not used as the necessity has not yet arisen and I hope it will not arise."

``We need about 15,000 new recruits to fill the vacancies in the cadre. We have not increased the present cadre. The vacancies were created mainly due to the soldiers retiring after their term of service," he stated.

A massive increase in salary has been offered to tackle the shortage - now a soldier would receive Rs. 11,000 per month - the Government has announced.

JAYEWARDENE'S YEARS OF POWER

A Contemporary Assessment (1987)



SRI LANKA

10

Years of Jayewardene Rule

S.Sivanayagam

The fact that a 7-year political dormancy separated Junius Richard Jayewardene's years of power and his death at the age of 90 may have had something to do with the charitable references, and the flattering obituaries and cosmetic acclaim that he earned at his death.

Public memory being what it is, short, and often selective, HOT SPRING brings to its readers the first part of a contemporary assessment and narrative of Jayewardene's years of power, written and published in 1987.

IN a 40-page booklet, titled 10 YEARS OF JAYEWARDENE RULE, the author S. Sivanayagam covered the years 1977 - 1987, and records a chunk of history that was both dark and depressing, and illustrative of the ignoble style of Jayewardene's governance.

……………………

On July 22, 1987, the President of Sri Lanka, Junius Richard Jayawardene completes 10 years of power; the longest single spell by a politician in that country.

Here is a list of the succession during the near- 40 years of independence:

Don Stephen Senanayake	(UNP)	4/2 years
Dudley Senanayake	(UNP)	1/2 years
Sir John-Kotelawala	CUNP)	2/2 years
S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike	(SLFP)	3/2 years
W. Dahanayake (interim)	(SLFP)	1/2 year
Dudley Senanayake	(UN P)	- 4 months
Mrs. Bandaranaike	(SLFP)	4 years 8 months
Dudley Senanayake	(UNP)	5 years
Mrs. Bandaranaike	(SLFP)	7 years 2 months
J.R. Jayewardene	(UNP)	10 years

While from the very beginning of independence until now all Sinhalese politicians with one exception-Dudley Senanayake- had demonstrated a desire for power, it remains paradoxical that it was the latter, the reluctant "Hamlet of Ceylon politics" who was called upon to serve three terms in office; he was in fact the first Prime Minister to complete the full 5-year tenure permitted under the constitution. He also remains on record as the only head of government who tried consciously to eschew opportunistic policies. It was perhaps not coincidental that his was the only period in post independence history when Tamils chose to join the mainstream politics.

Two Prime Ministers, D.S.Senanayake and S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike died in office (the former falling off a horse and the latter shot by a Buddhist monk), while the others quit prematurely or were voted out of power. The process of entrenching themselves in power beyond the allotted term began with Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike who added to her years in office by the simple expedient of changing the constitution and gaining time. J.R. Jayewardene did the same, but in a more imposing style.

When the history of the post-independence period of Sri Lanka comes to be written, there can be little doubt that, irrespective of how longer President Jayawardene continues in office (or is permitted to continue), his years in power will emerge in dark contrast against the rest of the period -a blood - soaked chapter in the life of a country which had for long earned the happy reputation of being a Paradise isle; a debilitating phase in the life of the majority Sinhalese people, who despite occasional bouts of mob violence against the minority Tamils, had been known for their spontaneity, warmth, hospitality and friendliness; and of course a period of unmitigated tragedy for the Tamils, who, oppressed by the very State to which they were expected to owe allegiance, decided either to fight back or flee the country.

1977 - a Government born in violence

If one were asked to epitomise the ten years of Jayewardene rule from 1977 to 1987 in one word, that word cannot be anything other than VIOLENCE. The very induction of the government with its stunning, unprecedented electoral victory in July 1977 (United National Party-141; Sri Lanka Freedom Party-8; Tamil United Liberation Front-18) was characterised by violence, in which SLFP workers and supporters, apart from getting "pulverized" at the polls, were also physically pummelled by UNP storm troopers who were intoxicated by their overpowering victory. Curiously, within one month of Jayewardene being installed in power, that :same flow of violence changed course sharply and metamorphosed into anti -Tamil rioting, resulting in the killing of over 300 Tamils (the official figures given were around 100), the destruction and looting of Tamil-owned property on a devastating scale, and the displacement of 120,000 Tamils of whom 50,000 plantation Tamils of recent Indian origin became permanent refugees in the (then) safety of the North -East. Reporting the violence in its issue of September 5, 1977, under the headline- SRI LANKA-THE BEAST IN MAN, *Newsweek* said: (Kai Bird with Barry Came in Hong Kong and Mervyn de Siiva in Colombo) "I have seen the beast in man", said one official describing the scene. "I have seen men burnt alive and women raped and houses set ablaze". Seven leading British citizens wrote to the *Times, London* (September 20, 1977) -

Race Conflict in Ceylon

From Sir John Foster, Q.C., and others

Sir, A tragedy is taking place in Sri Lanka: the political conflict following on the recent elections is turning into a racial massacre. It is estimated by reliable sources that between 250 and 300 Tamil citizens have lost their lives and over 40,000 made homeless Limitation on travel is making it hard for correspondents in Sri Lanka to let the world know what is happening

The Tamils are a community of over two million who flourished under the British, but have suffered discrimination since. They have now lost confidence in their treatment by the Sinhalese majority and are calling for a restoration of their separate national status, which they had for many centuries before the British came. At the last elections, the Tamil party advocating a separate state gained overwhelming majorities in all Tamil districts This, no doubt, triggered off the murders, which are said to have been committed either by police acting without orders or with the connivance of the police

At "Braemar", his residence at Ward Place, Colombo7.

At a time when the West is awake to the evils of racialism, the racial persecution of the Tamils and denial of their human rights should not pass without protest. The British have a special obligation to protest. as these cultivated people were put at the mercy of their neighbours less than thirty years ago by the British government They need our attention and support.

yours faithfully,
JOHN FOSTOR
DAVID ASTOR
ROBERT BIRLEY
LOUIS BLOM-COOPER
JAMES FAWCETT
DINGLE FOOT
MICHAEL SCOTT

That was a 10-year flashback. After 10 years, the violence is yet there in an even more virulent form. Mr. Jayewardene is there, armed with the powers of an Executive President and enjoying the kind of authority that rarely comes the way of a leader of a democratic government. To the Tamils living in the North-East, violence has become a daily way of life Their children are born and bred in an atmosphere reeking with violence. The Sinhalese children are doing no better. They are growing up in an environment which is militarising the human mind; breathing the miasma of irrational fears, fears of the very extinction of the Sinhala race! It has been a period of reilentless unceasing violence, all ten years of it; an age of turbulence weaving new and newer patterns all the time, making the spirit of violence hovering over Sri Lanka increasingly complex.

The Seven Faces of Violence

Violence today wears seven faces in Sri Lanka :

(1) **Sinhla mob violence against Tamil civilians.** This has a 30 - year history, beginning with 1956.

(2) **Sinhala State violence against Tamil civilians.** This trend which began in

1961 under the rule ot Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike following the nonviolent Tamil political agitation of that year has now under Jayewardene reached the proportions of near-genocide

(3) **Tamil militant violence against the State.** This assumed organised form and strength under the rule of Jayewardene.

(4) **Sinhala State violence against Tamil militants.** No one complains about this, least of all the militants themselves.

(5) **Tamil militant violence against Sinhala civilians.** This is a comparatively recent development, but not a surprising one, given the backdrop of Sinhala mob and State violence against Tamil civilians which failed to arouse either the Sinhala or the world conscience.

(6) **Sinhala dissentient violence against the Sinhala State.** This is a new tendency, spewed by Jayewardene's own authoritarianism

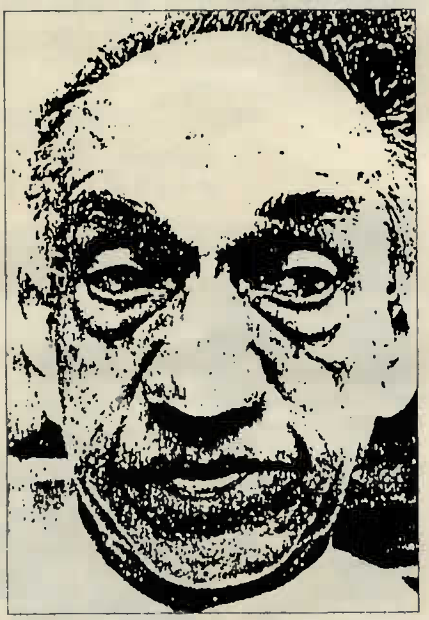
(7) **Sinhala State violence agalinst Sinhala dissent.** One sees in it only the tip of the iceberg, although it had been a consistent feature of the Jayewardene rule. But this may well prove to be in the future the crowning finale leading to the end of the Jayewardene era.

The question may well be asked: How much of this violence is a part of a historical process that President Jayewardene inherited and how much of it is his own individual contributory share? Let us try to delineate the strands of contemporary history. The linkage between a leader and the historical process could be likened to the pilot and his plane. The pilot flies mostly on his instruments; the human intervention and skill matters most in the take-off and the landing. When Jayewardene assumed power in 1977, his very take-off proved ruinous.

Even as the rioting began to spread in the second half of August, (as Prime Minister then, Mr. Jayewardene addressed the Pariiament on 18th August. He said:

"Mr. Speaker, I do not think this is an occasion to quarrel or an occasion to be flippant., Innocent lives have been lost, public property damaged and there have been cases of arson and violence not only in the Jaffna peninsula but also in various parts of the island. What we have to consider is not even the cause of what happened (!). but how we are to stop this conflagration immediately and effectively. We have taken the first action that we could. We have declared a curfew in the whole of the North Central Province commencing from 4 p.m. today; a similar curfew has been declared in the Kurunegala district and in the Matale District as well as in the town of Panadura...

"The reason for this conflict I do not know (!), but to find it out the Government has decided to appoint a Commission of Inquiry immediately...



"When acts of this nature are committed it does not matter who committed the acts (!) Whether such an act is committed by a Sinhala or a Tamil or by a member of the UNP or the TULF or the SLFP is irrelevant (!). Suitable action will be taken against any person, whoever he be, who breaks the laws of the land. *(Prolonged applause).*

"I thought I should give you an account of what is happening. As I said, in Panadura, a curfew has been declared. In Jaffna no curfew has been declared because the Honourable Leader of the Opposition *(A. Amirthalingam)* said it will be wise if a curfew is, not declared and now Jaffna I understand is quiet... By and large, Jaffna is quieter than many of the places I referred to..

Surprisingly, Mr. Jayewardene proceeded to list various incidents of violence in different parts of the country, in which practically all victims were Tamils, by way of loss of lives and loss of property. Having done so, Mr. Jayewardene continued:

"So, that is not in any way a happy story for me to unfold. We should all be sad that innocent people are being killed and their property looted. You see from this account that outside Jaffna all the shops and all the persons injured have been Tamil people. There is I think, the case of one Muslim but all the others have been Tamils. I do not know who is doing this. There may be individuals who are arrested and they will be dealt with according to the law *(Applause).* But whether there is a plan behind it I do not know, I cannot say, and the Commission of inquiry may be able to help us. But it is obvious that there are people who, one may call, criminal minded people, who take advantage of a situation like this. They feel that if they attack Tamil boutiques they will not be in trouble with the people around them and they will take advantage of that circumstance to loot Tamil shops and boutiques...

Who wants a fight?

Mr. Jayewardene departed at this point to address specifically Tamil leaders and the Tamil people. He said:

"I would like to impress upon the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that I am not going to deal now with their demand or agitation for a separate State. We are one nation, and this Government is elected to govern the whole island. *(Prolonged applause)* You yourself want me not to shirk my responsibility for the portion which you think is part of the Tamil Eelam. I do not intend to, because to my mind all citizens of this country, to whatever race they may belong, whatever religion they profess, are citizens which this Government has been elected to protect (!) *(Prolonged applause)* I intend to do that, without casting any aspersions on any political views they may hold. However, if I may advise the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues. please be careful in your words when you use them in the **Sinhala areas** (!) I Understand that speeches were made in Colombo which under the normal law would be considered sedition and infammatory. *(Cries of Shame, Shame)* The vast majority of people in this country have not got the restraint and the reserve that Members of Parliament, particularly those in the front ranks (!) have been used to. They become restive when they hear such remarks as that a separate State is to be formed; that Trincomalee is to be the capital of that State; that Napoleon had said that Trincomalee was the key to the Indian Ocean and there fore Trincomalee is going to be the capital of the State of Eelam.

"Whatever it is, when statements of that type are made and the newspapers carry them throughout the island, and when you say that you are not violent but that violence may be used in time to come, what do you think the other peaple in Sri Lanka would do? How will they react? **If you want to fight let there be a fight; if you want peace let there be peace.** *(Prolonged applause).* **That is what they will say. It is not what I am saying.....**

On superficial reading, the speech does not seem to damage the man who spoke the words, except perhaps that concluding flourish. But there are several hidden messages in it, which alhough expressed in the English language, carry a load of meaning only to the Sinhaiese and the Tamii people. It has the cleverness of a Mark Antony oration and the craftiness of a Machiavelli. The speech was intended (as all subsequent speeches of J.R. Jayewardene and like all speeches of all Sinhala Prime Ministers since 1956) to: (a) Appease the Sinhala constituency; (b) Threaten the Tamils with dire consequences if they did not behave. It was a double-edged threat, that of attack by Sinhala mobs on Tamils in the south, and repression by the armed forces in the North-East (where no Sinhala mobs are available!). A perceptive comment on this was made by a Western commentator, Martin Woollacot, who writing in the *Guardian,* London in August 1977, said: "The central problem of Sri Lankan politics is well illustrated by the fact that Mr. Jayewardene in spite of his large majority, and although he was faced with a situation that Sinhalese were clearly the aggressors, still feel it politically necessary to warn the Tamils".

There are several questions that emerge that need answering by independent commentators. In a country that has its laws on sedition, law officers to prosecute, law courts to decide, and a government to enforce the laws, how does it become the responsibility of the Sinhalese people to see that sedition is punished? How can it not matter to the Prime Minister of a country, (as he says) not to know who has committed the acts of violence ? Why is it irrelevant to find out whether it is a Tamil or a Sinhalese who has committed a murder? In which case what was the need for a Commission of Inquiry to be announced even while the rioting was going on? How come Mr. Jayewardene refers to "Sinhala areas" in his speech, when the Sri Lankan government vocabulary does not admit anything called "Tamil areas"? Can there be "Sinhala areas" without "Tamil areas " ?

If the history of relations between the Tamils and the successive Sinhala governments has been a series of missed opportunites, as many observers have commented, it was Mr. Jayewardene who had the best opportunity in 1977, and possibly the last one. He had a steam - roller majority in Parliament; he did not have to fear opposition from his traditional rivals of the SLFP who were absolutely demoralised. Almost all the plantation Tamils had voted for him, as well as the indigenous Tamils outside the North-East. Even the TULF leader A. Amirthalingam who had come to Colombo with a mandate for Tamil Eelam was safely ensconced in the chair of the Leader of the Opposition. What was Mr. Jayewardene waiting for? His own party manifesto had stated: "The United National Party accepts the position that there are numerous problems confronting the Tamil speaking people. The lack of a solution to their problems made Tamil-speaking people support even a movement for the creation of a separate state. In the interests of a national integration and unity so necessary for the economic development of the whole country, the Party feels such problems should be solved **without loss of time.** (this writer's emphasis). The party when it comes to power will take all possible steps to remedy their grievances in such fields as (1) Education (2) Colonization (3) Use of Tamil language (4) Employment in the Public and semi-public Corporations. We shall summon an All-Party conference as stated earlier and implement its decisions". How does one explan Mr. Jayewardene's shilly-shallying therefore? Was it a lack of political will, as charitable academics would prefer to interpret it, or was it sheer political deceit? Mr. Jayewardene's track record over the past ten years would seem to suggest that it was the latter.0

(To be continued in the next issue)

The wreckage of a train coach destroyed by a bomb a Ambala station in punjab on 2nd December. At least 12 passanger were killed and 37 injured in the blast, wich police say marks an upsurge in separatist violence in the region.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TV SPECIAL ON TAMIL SUFFERING IN SRI LANKA

Research by a University of Colorado at Boulder doctoral student on the plight and religion of Tamil people seeking solace within Sri Lanka's war zone will be featured in a National Geographic Explorer TV special Dec. 1.

Anthropology doctoral student Patricia Lawrence has been studying how the Tamil people have turned to local religious practices to cope with "disappearances" and unnatural death during civil war in eastern Sri Lanka. In the past 15 years, tens of thousands of lives have been lost in the violent conflict between Sri Lankan government forces and Tamil separatists fighting for an independent homeland in the northern and eastern regions of the island nation.

Lawrence is the only American social scientist who has conducted extensive research in the war-torn region since violence intensified in the 1990s. Her studies have concentrated on the social suffering of Tamil families in the eastern district of Batticaloa, caught between the government forces and the fighters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

"Fear is palpable inside the war zone," said Lawrence, who lived with many Tamil families during her trips to the island's east coast from 1991 to 1996. She said the Tamil's grievances are based on a history of discrimination in language, education, employment and land tenure by the Sri Lankan government.

"Religious practices at Hindu temples provide families with and avenue for overcoming silences imposed on desperate human circumstances - moments to express unresolved grief in a world altered by violence," she said.

Lawrence's research documents how local religious practices help the Tamils come to terms with executions, torture, abductions and arrests by government military forces. Hindu goddesses once called upon to bestow health and prosperity and bring rain "are now asked to intercede in violent events and to provide information about arbitrary arrests and disappearances," she said.

During such rituals, local religious people known as oracles assume the character and personality of Hindu goddesses as they speak to the villagers, said Lawrence. "Oracles at local temples become safe witnesses who provide solace and counsel amidst the chaos and injury of war."

In one scene from the television special, a young woman whose brother was arrested and imprisoned by the government walks barefoot across a deep pit of charcoal embers. The woman had made a vow to the local goddess to "walk the fire" after requesting her brother's release from prison. Thousands of similar vows are made and kept at local temples today, said Lawrence.

Sri Lanka has been under a state of emergency rule for 27 of the past 43 years and the emergency law has been used to censor news coverage and scholarly writing on the conflict, she said. "Electroshock torture continues to be used in places of detention inside the war zone." said Lawrence, who has interviewed a number of Tamil torture survivors as part of her doctoral dissertation.

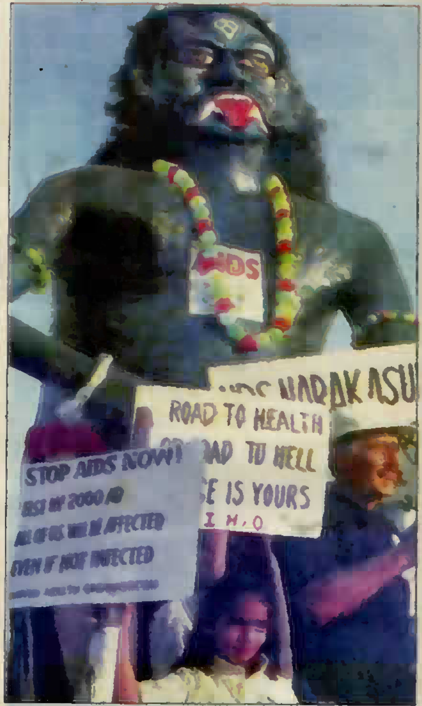
Emergency rule in Sri Lanka has allowed the military to arbitrarily arrest and detain thousands of Tamils, said Lawrence. In some cases, civilians have been held for more than five years by the government without a court order of charge filed against them.

Without third-party mediation, a political solution to the conflict seems unlikely. "Sadly, there does not seem to be an end to political violence in sight," said Lawrence.

Lawrence is completing her doctoral dissertation under Professor Dennis McGilvray, who has studied the Tamil culture for more than 20 years. Her research is funded in part by the MacArthur Foundation, the Fulbright Foundation and the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation.

Lawrence's research on the civil war's impacts on the Tamils also will be featured in a BBC television special expected to premiere early next year.

The AIDS "demon"



A child in front of a statue symbolising AIDS in Bombay, during a rally held to mark World Aids Day. Aids accounted for 6.4 million deaths, a quarter of which occurred in the past year.

THE INDIAN CYCLE RICKSHAW GOES TO OXFORD

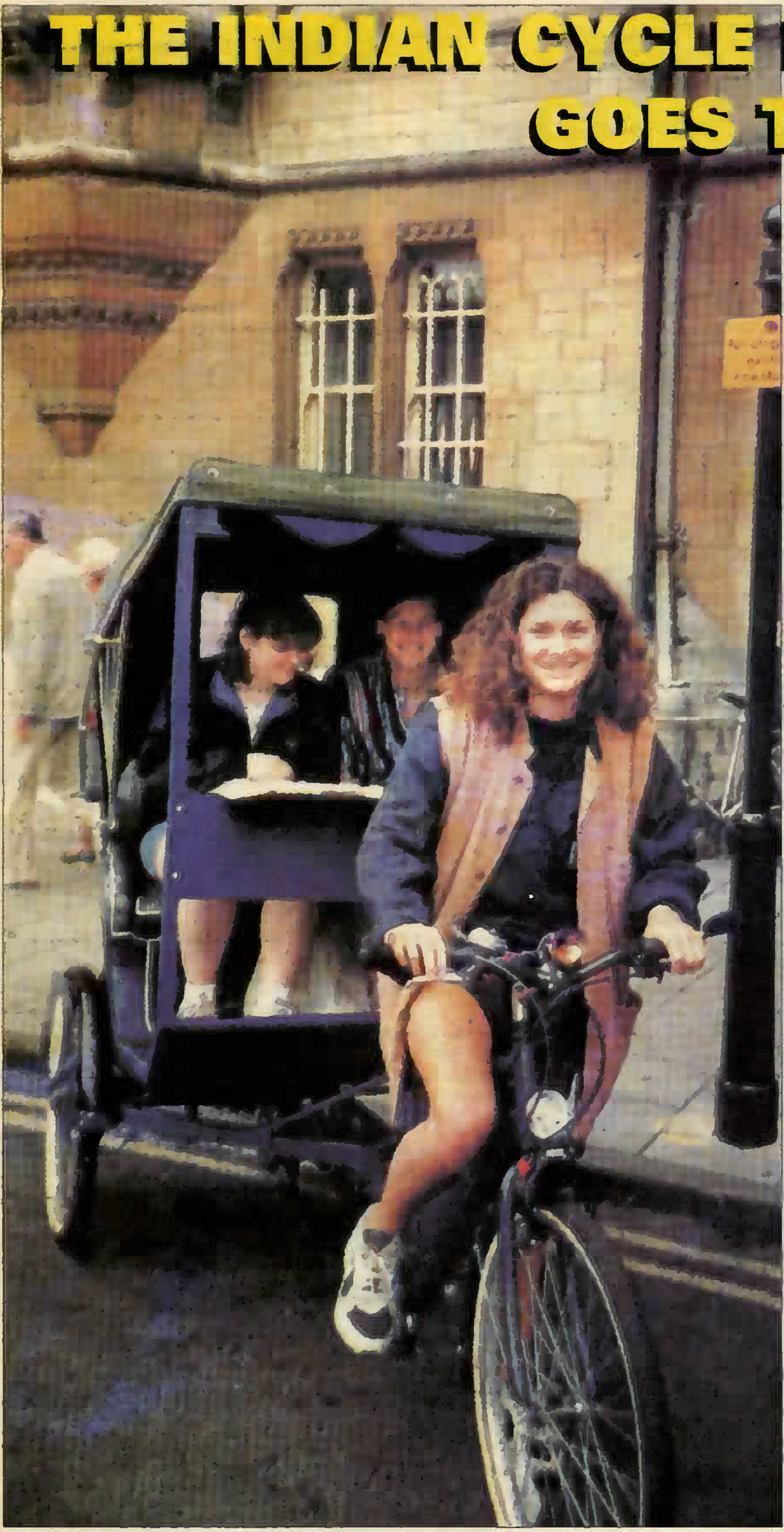
Whoever would have expected the lowly Indian cycle rickshaw to be plying for hires in the prestigious university town of Oxford ? And who pedals them for hire ? Oxford university students themselves - tour guides - who find in it a healthy, lucrative, part-time job !

"I wanted to make the rickshaw respectable, comfortable, and safe, and I have done it", says Erica Steinhauer, the woman who conceived the idea and has made a success of her business, the Oxford Rickshaw Co. Her rickshaws have 21 gears, hydraulic disc brakes and battery-operated halogen lamps. The passengers are provided with hot water bags and blankets in winter. She has 20 of these rickshaws on the road now. The modified chassis for this 3-wheeled contraption is made in Birmingham but the upholstery and canopy come from India.

An environmentalist, Erica says: Given a choice,people will go in for pedalling and public transport; and points out that the pollution caused by cars in Britain has caused asthma in children to rise by 60 percent over the last three years.

Most of the tour guides are graduates or students of Oxford University. Mathew Bramoll, a graduate in politics, philosophy and economics chose to drive a rickshaw because of the ecofriendliness of the job."Besides, it is a part-time job and the pedalling keeps me fit", he says.

Erica's company guides take tourists on a 45-minute tour round the city for £15. Those with a tight schedule can have a 15- minute rickshaw experience for E8.50.



Photograph shows Oxford student Jeni Saint pulling out from her rank on a tour. *(The Week, India)*

People

Diana and Muslim heart surgeon

Princess Diana is never out of the news. The British tabloid Press make sure of it. Recently the SUNDAY MIRROR came out with a report that Diana, now freed of her encumbrance with Prince Charles, has fallen "desperately in love" with a Muslim heart surgeon Hasnat Khan. The paper splashed the report over most of its first five pages. Hasnat Khan is an unmarried British-based cardiac specialist whose family lives in Pakistan.

Diana promptly denied the report. The DAILY MAIL quoted unidentified friends of Diana as laughing off the report in public, but privately deeply upset by it. A Diana aide said: It is no secret that the two are friends, but in an entirely professional way"

Michael Jackson to become a father

Pop star Michael Jackson married the woman who is carrying his child in an early morning ceremony in Sydney while on a concert tour. Jackson, 38, married 37-year old nurse Debbie Rowe, a longtime friend and reported to be "very pretty and blonde". This is Jackson's second marriage. His first wife Lisa Marie Presley filed for divorce in January, 20 months after they were married.

Asia's first lady Bishop

The Reverend Dr.Katakshamma was consecrated as Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Andhra Pradesh, India, making her the first woman in Asia to rise to this position of eminence.

Concentrated in the southern parts of India, the Lutherans, considered among the more progressive in the many Christian denominations in India, form a sizeable section of the Christian diaspora in the country.

Dr.Katakshamma received her post-graduate certificate in theology from the New York Theological Seminary in 196H, and last year she was awarded a doctorate from St.Paul's College in Minnesota Along with her husband, Paul Raj, also a pastor, she runs five high schools, conducts an adult literacy campaign and holds tailoring and embroidery classes for tribal women. (The Week, India)

Jemima and Imran have a baby boy

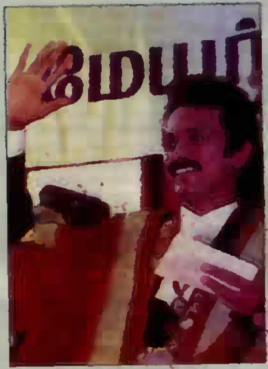
Jemima Khan, wife of the Pakistani test cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan, gave birth to a baby boy on Sunday November 17. It was a normal birth, and the baby weighed 7 pounds 14 ounces, according to a spokeswoman for the Portland hospital in London, which has a maternity clinic that often caters to the rich and famous. The baby's name was not immediately announced.

Jemima, 22-year old daughter of wealthy industrialist Sir James Goldsmith, surprised both Britons and Pakistanis when she wed Khan, 42. But she said she would fit into his culture, converted into Islam, and moved to Pakistan.

Imran Khan and Jemima's mother, Lady Annabel Goldsmith were both present at the birth, according to the spokeswoman.

Stalin is Mayor of Chennai

For 23 years, the Madras Corporation had no Mayor, and there were no elections for local bodies in Tamil Nadu. Now, in a massive exercise in grass roots democracy, 1.32 lakh persons have been elected to various local body posts. Madras, renamed with its Tamil name Chennai, has a young Mayor, no less a person than Chief Minister Karunanidhi's own son, MK.Stalin. He defeated his nearest rival and AIADMK-Congress backed Janata candidate V.S.Chandralekha by a huge majority of 4 lakh votes.



43-year old Stalin has been a member of the Madras Legistlative Assembly (MLA) representing the Thousand Lights constituency.

Social & Personal

Benazir's husband Asif Zardari

Who was responsible for the recent political downfall of Benazir Bhutto? Many Pakistanis will say : It's the husband.

The moustached 42-year old Asif Ali Zardari is often referred to as "Mr.10 percent, for alleged commissions he is reported to have received on various government deals. Once arrested in 1990, and tried for corruption, he was however freed as the charges could not be substantiated. The feuds within the Bhutto clan climaxed with the recent killing of Benazir's brother Murtaza, and many Pakistanis think that Zardari was behind the killing. Like the Chandrika-Anura bad blood in Sri Lanka, Benazir and brother Murtaza never got on with each other.

More on Diana & the surgeon

That is the 36-year old Pakistani cardiologist, Dr. Hasnat Khan, about whose affair with Princess Diana continues to remain a talking point in Britain's social circles. It is now reported that the Princess loves to watch him at work, and has been present at several open heart surgery operations which the doctor performs.

But what about the question of a possible marriage? The SUNDAY MIRROR avers that British society may not like the idea of their future king having a Muslim stepfather. Diana's eldest son William, the heir apparent to the British throne may even find it difficult to accept any new man in his mother's life.

CENTRAL - VEMBADI JOINT NITE

"JOINT NITE" is an annual event organised by the Old Students of Jaffna Central College and Vembadi Girls's High School in the United Kingdom. This year's function held on the 12th October at the Putney Leisure Centre Hall,Dryburgh Road, London SW15 was specially significant, because it marred the tenth year of the inauguration of the Old Students associations in London. Jaffna Central College is 180 years old this year. The school was founded by Methodist missionaries from England on 1st August 1816.

The Philatelic Bureau of the Department of Posts(Sri Lanka) issued one million Rs.2 denominational stamps and First Day covers on the 7th September 1996 to commemmorate the 180 years of the founding of the school. The Joint Nite function this year deviated from the usual by introducing a programme of variety entertainment in addition to the dinner dance. A large number of children of old students took part, and the function itself had an unusually large gathering of old students.

T.Puthirasingham
Old Centralite

CHUNDIKULI - ST.JOHN'S PAST PUPILS MEET

The annual general meeting and dinner dance of the Chundikuli-St.John's Past Pupils UK Association was held on 2nd November at the Ealing Town Hall , London. The highlight of the evening was the presence of Mrs.P.Jeyaveerasingham who retired recently as Principal of Chundikuli Girls College. Also present were Mr & Mrs.J.T.Chelliah, retired Vice-Principal and Principal of the two schools.

In a recently received letter from Dr.E.S.Thevasagayam, retired Principal of St.John's College giving details of the extensive damage to the two schools, St.John's appears to have been one of the worst hit schools in Jaffna. The cost of repairs for the two schools is estimated to be about Rs. 7.5 million. Dr.Thevasagayam has made an appeal to the past pupils for help.

MARRIED

Parthipan-Priyadharshini

Parthipan, son of Mr & Mrs. K.Kanthapillai of 49, Haverford Way Edgeware Middx HA8 6DJ and Priyadharshini, daughter of Dr. S. Puvanendran and Mrs.Puvanendran of 9 Rochester Gardens, East Croydon, Surrey CRO 5NN, on Sunday 15th September at Fairfield Hall, Park Lane,Croydon, Surrey, UK.

Bahirathan - Prasanthi

Bahirathan, son of Mr & Mrs.V.Muthurajah of 59, Gihon Spring Drive, Etobicoke, Ontario M9V 4S4 Canada and Prasanthi, daughter of Mr & Mrs.T.Biswanath of 16635N. Cave Creek Road Apt.110, Phoenix, AZ 85032, USA, on Monday the 25th November at Sri Venkateshwara Temple, Pittsburg, USA.

Hartley College Past Pupils meet in London

Past pupils of Hartley College, Point Pedro, Jaffna, in U.K. held their annual general meeting and annual dinner on 11th November at Queen's Hotel, 122 Church Road, Crystal Palace, London SE19 2UG.

At the AGM held before the Dinner, the following office-bearers were elected unopposed: President: V.Santhalingam: Vice-President A. Easwaramohan;Secretary:G.D.Kulasingam; Treasurer:T.Rajkumar; Sports Secretary: T.Arulnanthy; Committee members: A.Paramakuru, Dr.K.Mylvaganam and G.R.Selvarajan.

The Dinner was attended by about 150 members, spouses, friends and children. The guests of honour were: Mr. & Mrs. Atputhanathan and Mr.S.Shanmuganathan. Mr.Atputhanathan is a past pupil and former teacher of Hartley, and Mr.Shanmuganathan is Vice-Presiden of the Colombo Past Pupils Association, and a Director of Union Bank of Colombo Ltd.

OBITUARIES

DR.M.SIVANESAN

Dr.M.Sivanesan of Dover House Surgery, 28, Bolton Road, Edmonton, London N18, formerly of Puloly, Point Pedro, born 12 January 1939, passed away after a brief illness on 28 October.His funeral took place at the Golders Green Crematorium on 2 November.

Dr.Sivanesan was the husband of Satyabhama, father of Sharmila and Premila, and son of the late Manonmany and Muttusamy (Teacher, Singapore). He was the youngest brother of the late Mahesan, Leela Velauthampillai (Adelaide), Kantha Sithamparapilla (Sydney), Sitha Balasingam (Colombo), Ganeson, Karthigesan, Parvatha Vadivelu and Globaha Maha Kanapathypillai, all of Puloly, and the son-in-law of Annaluxmy and R.Paramaguru (retd. District Judge, Sri Lanka).

He was an old student of Hartley College and St.John's College.

* * * * *

DR.MILROY HUNT

Dr.Milroy Christian Jeyaratnam Hunt (72), expired 13 November. He leaves his wife Carmel, daughter of the late Dr.S.F.Chellapah and Mrs. Chellapah.

* * * * *

DR.ARULRAJ SINNIAH

Dr.Arulraj Sinniah (67), Consultant Physician, Highlands Hospital Winchmore Hill, died 12 October. He was a son of the late Dr.S.A. sinniah, Veterinary Surgeon, Peradeniya. He leaves his wife Sheilanee Moorthy and children Niranjan, Ravindra, Sharmini and Suresh, and sister Mrs. Jayaranee Rasanayagam.

APPRECIATION

ANNA ANPU VIJAYARATNAM

(1910- 1996)

Born in the village of Araly in Jaffna, Anna Anpu Vijayaratnam died as a result of a road accident and was cremated in London on 8 November.

In paying her a tribute, Rev.Mark R Booth, Superintendent Methodist Minister said: Anpu was the second child to her Station Master father Sellathurai who died when she was only seven.She went to the CMS School in Jaffna, where she was a bright pupil and passed the Cambridge Senior.

She trained as a teacher but married Vijayaratnam, a lawyer from her home village.Vijayaratnam died after 23 years of marriage, while his daughters Malar, Gnanam, were at college and sons Raja and Dharman were at school. Anpu was very brave. With no income, she rented out half the house,went out to teach and "abandoned herself to the arms of the Lord". Her faith had always been important to her. She and her husband were stalwart members of the Methodist Church in Kandy, but her interests and her commitment were not exclusively denominational

She retired in 1970 and gave herself once more to her family, supporting her childen as they made their relationships and their careers. Reluctantly, she fled the troubles of her homeland, abandoned her house in Jaffna, left perhaps a little of her heart behind, and came to London

After her trip to Israel this year, she was weary and worn, not wanting to die, but willing and ready to most her Maker.

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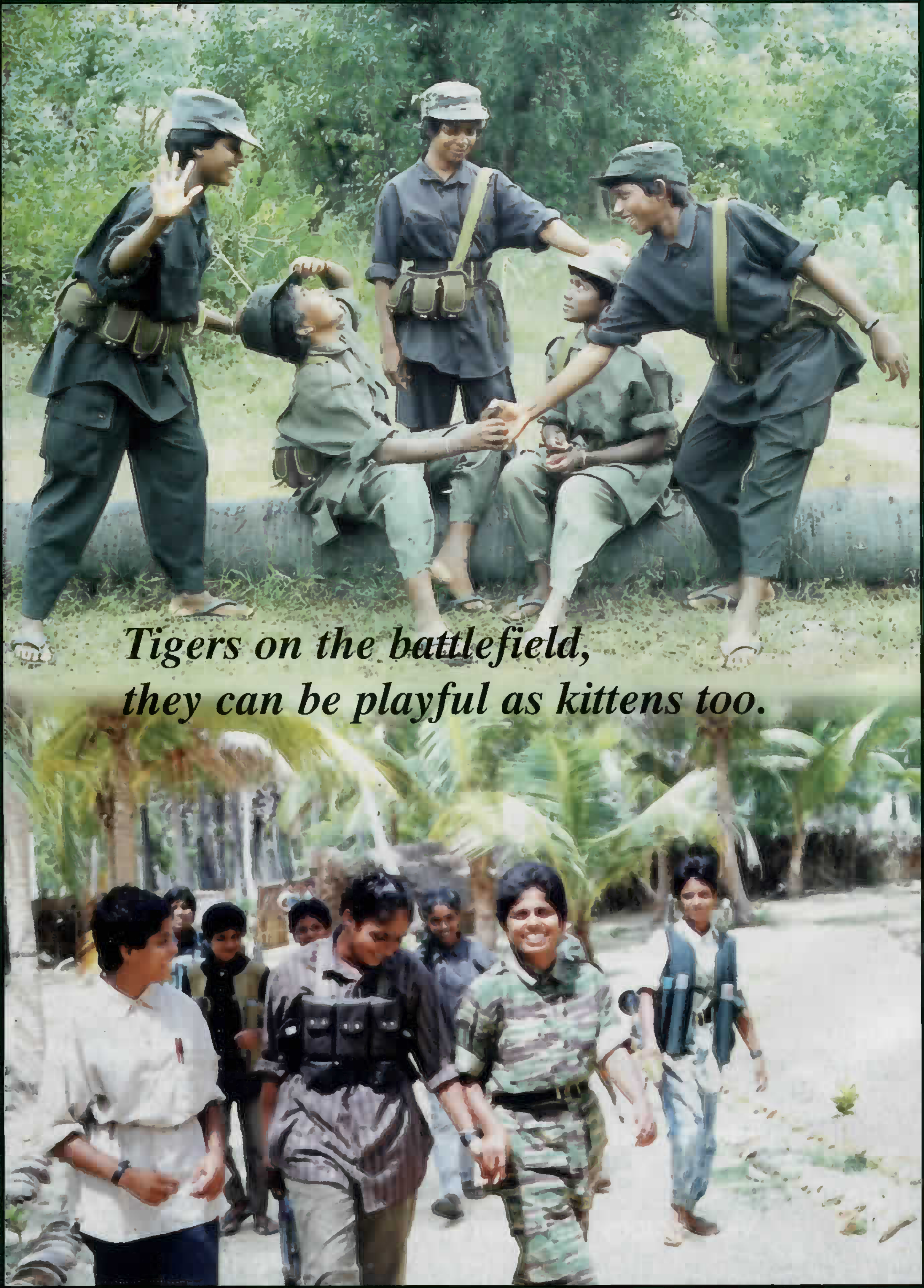
Tigers on the battlefield,
they can be playful as kittens too.

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